





THE LIBRARY  
OF  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CALIFORNIA  
LOS ANGELES

1875

1876

1877

1878

1879

1880

1881

1882

1883

1884

1885

1886

1887

1888

1889

1890

1891

1892

1893

1894

1895

1896

1897

1898

1899

1900

1901

1902

1903

1904

1905

1906

1907

1908

1909

1910

1911

1912

1913

1914

1915

1916

1917

1918

1919

1920

1921

1922

1923

1924

1925

1926

1927

1928

1929

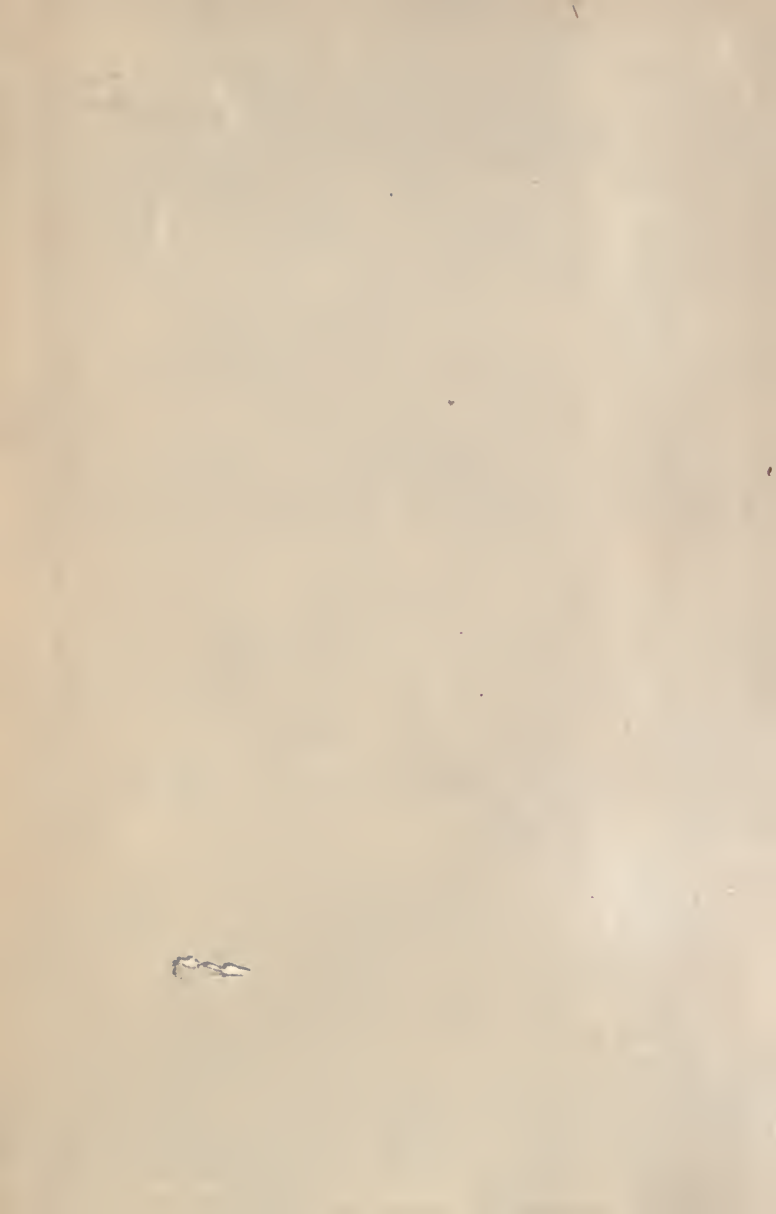
1930

1931

1932

1933

1934

















THE HAPPY HOME CIRCLE.

# OUR HOMES;

THEIR

Cares and Duties, Joys and Sorrows.

EDITED BY

T. S. ARTHUR.

---

NEW YORK

JOHN W. LOVELL COMPANY

150 WORTH STREET, CORNER MISSION PLACE

Copyrighted by  
**HUBBARD BROTHERS.**  
1888.



PS  
645  
A760

## PREFACE.

---

IN the homes of a country its good and evil influences originate. The carefully trained and wisely educated child grows up into a useful citizen, and works in his allotted sphere for the maintenance of general order, while the neglected child, left to the guidance of his own natural evils, and subjected to a thousand temptations to vice and crime, pushes his way to manhood, a trespasser on the rights of others and a scourge upon the community. Between these extremes are the gradations of good and evil influences, the origins of which may be traced back to the homes in which young life first received its impulses.

A truism though this may be, its repetition can

(8)

1117372

hardly be made too often ; and we venture it here as a fitting introduction to a volume the object of which is clearly apparent in the title. Nor are home-duties and home-influences confined to the child alone. They embrace all ages, sexes, and conditions of life—for who is there so poor as not to have a home? As our homes are, so will we in a great measure be ; for every day their impress is upon us—every day we feel their beauty, or are marred by their disorder and deformity—every day we give out salutary or perverting influences, as well as receive them.

In the various domestic scenes which are here presented, as well as in the grave suggestions and admonitions, we have endeavoured to meet all states ; and furnish incitement to good deeds in all minds. The articles which make up the book are selected from a wide range of sources, and are written by almost as many different authors, so that home and its relations are seen from varied positions, in the hues of many minds, and illustrated by the light of many experiences.

## CONTENTS.



<b>THE POOR MAN'S FAIRIES</b> . . . . .	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>THREE NEW YEARS' EVES</b> . . . . .	8
<b>THE POWER OF KINDNESS</b> . . . . .	17
"OUR PET" . . . . .	21
<b>THANKSGIVING</b> . . . . .	22
<b>HOME</b> . . . . .	27
<b>PRAISE AMONG THE MARRIED</b> . . . . .	31
<b>THE ART OF LIVING EASY</b> . . . . .	37
<b>OH, SING TO ME SOFTLY, MY SISTER</b> . . . . .	41
<b>AN EVENING AT HOME</b> . . . . .	42
<b>TWO YEARS OLD</b> . . . . .	50
<b>A THIMBLE-FULL OF ROMANCE</b> . . . . .	52
<b>MY MOTHER</b> . . . . .	61
<b>MUSIC IN FAMILIES</b> . . . . .	64
<b>DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILDREN READ?</b> . . . . .	67
<b>THE PROGRESS OF GREEDINESS</b> . . . . .	70
<b>THE CRADLE AWAY UP IN THE GARRET</b> . . . . .	80
<b>THE HEAVENLY SHEPHERD</b> . . . . .	84
<b>HE NEVER KEPT HIS WIFE WAITING</b> . . . . .	86
<b>MY OWN FIRESIDE</b> . . . . .	89
<b>BE PATIENT WITH THE LITTLE ONES</b> . . . . .	90
<b>THE INVALID WIFE</b> . . . . .	92
"THE OLD FOLKS" . . . . .	95
<b>OBEDIENCE, HOW TAUGHT TO CHILDREN</b> . . . . .	98
<b>OUR HOMES</b> . . . . .	102
<b>MRS. WINTERFORD AND HER SERVANTS</b> . . . . .	103

THE SPARE BED-ROOM . . . . .	119
DUTY TO PARENTS . . . . .	122
THE TWO PARTINGS . . . . .	137
"ONE SET APART" . . . . .	145
COUSIN HETTIE AND HER MOTHER-IN-LAW . . . . .	149
MUSINGS AND MEMORIES . . . . .	158
FILIAL PIETY . . . . .	160
GODFATHER VIVIAN . . . . .	164
THE STORY OF THE BROKEN FLOWER-POT . . . . .	171
IS WORK DEGRADING? . . . . .	176
THE CHILDREN OF THE LORD . . . . .	181
GIRLS' HEADS AGAINST VEST PATTERNS . . . . .	190
FAITHFUL LOVE—A FAMILY PICTURE . . . . .	194
THE WAY MY MITHER DID IT . . . . .	198
DEATHS OF LITTLE CHILDREN . . . . .	202
A HOME FOR MY MOTHER . . . . .	208
A CHILD'S FIRST LETTER . . . . .	210
LITTLE MOLLY . . . . .	212
FAREWELL TO A SISTER . . . . .	216
HEART-SHADOWS . . . . .	218
THE DUMB CHILD . . . . .	222
A SCENE FROM REAL LIFE . . . . .	225
THE FIRST BABY . . . . .	229
HOME LIGHTS AND HOME SHADOWS . . . . .	233
THE WORTH OF A DOLL . . . . .	237
FARMERS' SONS . . . . .	239
THE SPIRIT-MAIDEN OF RHINELAND . . . . .	254
PASSING AWAY . . . . .	260
HINTS FOR HUSBANDS . . . . .	263
BUY ONLY WHAT YOU WANT . . . . .	266
AN ANGEL BY THE HEARTH . . . . .	269
A WORD TO YOUNG HUSBANDS . . . . .	270
A WIFE'S SERMON; OR HINTS TO HUSBANDS . . . . .	274
MY WIFE . . . . .	282
A TRUE WIFE . . . . .	283
THE DYING CHILD . . . . .	284

# OUR HOMES

---

## THE POOR MAN'S FAIRIES

**O**h! mine is a fairy home,  
Though 'tis humble enough and **poor**;  
**T**here are prints of their tiny feet  
All over the sanded floor.

**T**here are sounds as of elfin glee,  
That awake me at peep of day;  
**T**here are wee things about my path,  
Ere I start with my spade away.

**L**ast night, ere I left the field,  
A friend, with a smiling face,  
**C**ame to ask me to go with him  
To some merry carousing place.

**B**ut methought that the while he talked  
I was touched with a magic wand—  
**W**ith a sprightly glimmer of starry eyes,  
And a look I can ne'er withstand.

## THREE NEW YEARS' EVES.

I saw one sweet anxious face  
 Await in the porch for me,  
 While three little busy elves  
 Were as merry as elves could be

I saw their sweet looks of love,  
 And my heart set off through the wood;  
 So I bade my old friend good-night,  
 And followed as fast as I could.

One fairy had made my tea,  
 And another had sliced my bread,  
 And a tiny one had clambered my knee  
 For a kiss ere she went to bed.

And Bess is the fairy queen,  
 And Harry, and Jane, and Kate  
 Are the three little busy elves  
 Who clustered around my gate.

Oh! mine is a fairy home,  
 Though men say there are fairies no more;  
 Still they beckon me when I roam,  
 And peep in at my cottage door.



## THREE NEW YEARS' EVES.

## EVE THE FIRST.

MR. and Mrs. Andrews had been married only a few months, and this was their first New Year's Eve. Theirs was truly a marriage of affection, and congenial tastes drew closer the bonds by which they were united. Familiarity with the best authors had developed the mind of Mr. Andrews intellectually; while a thorough busi-

ness education gave him a confidence in his own ability to make his way in the world, and left him undisturbed about the future. Mrs. Andrews had been carefully reared by a widowed mother, now removed from her by death, and had experienced just enough of the trials of self-dependence to feel the real comforts of her new position.

The home in which they found themselves on this, the first New Year's Eve of their married life, suited, in all respects, their unambitious tastes. It was not large, nor elegantly furnished, in the modern acceptation of that term; but light from their happy hearts was reflected on every object, making all beautiful in their eyes.

The intellectual tastes of Mr. Andrews had led him, in the arrangement of his new home, to set apart one small room as a library, and here most of the evenings of the young couple were spent. And it was here they had shut themselves in from the world on their first New Year's Eve, the husband reading aloud from a favourite book, and the happy young wife listening to his manly voice, and treasuring in her memory the sentiments that fell from his lips, while her fingers busied themselves with some elegant needlework.

This home was their Paradise, into which the tempter had not yet found an entrance. This was their world, beyond which thought had not yet strayed, nor imagination pictured a scene more desirable. Without was the desolation of winter; but within, the sunshine of love made all bright as an Arcadian summer.

Thus it was on their first New Year's Eve.

## EVE THE SECOND.

They are in the warm library, as on the last New Year's Eve. The husband is sitting with a book before him, but not reading, though thought seems busied in its pages. Yet, thought is far away from that quiet place, busying itself with some scheme of worldly gain. Since last year, he has become more absorbed in trade, and more ambitious to rise in the world; and, as a consequence, less interested in things purely intellectual. Many times since that first happy New Year's Eve, has his wife gone up to her chamber, after parting with him for the day, and wept as if her heart would break. And why? He had forgotten the parting kiss, or laid his lips to hers so coldly, that the touch chilled, instead of warming her heart. Oh! how many times had a doubt of his love come over her, filling her soul with anguish!

The pleasant library has another inmate—a babe sleeping in its warm cradle. And above this angel visitant, the mother bends and feasts her eyes upon its beauty. A new spring of joy has gushed forth in her spirit—new capacities for enjoyment have been created therein.

In some things, this eve is happier than the last; yet over the brightness of the scene a flitting shadow passes—for the world has come with its tempting bribes, and the heart of Mr. Andrews is not proof against them.

What we love, comes to the lips in speech. Mr. Andrews's desire to achieve large success in business, often led him to speak of what came first in his thoughts. Many times he had talked with his wife about his future, and gradually inspired her mind with something of the



ambition that filled his own. And this evening, while the babe slumbered, they talked of the coming year, and the large gains that were expected by the husband. More than once it was on his lips to speak of a better house, and more elegant home-surroundings; but a recollection of the happy hours they had spent in the pleasant room they occupied, caused him to repress the words.

---

## EVE THE THIRD.

Three more years have passed with their joys and sorrows.

"We are on the last hours of the year," said Mrs. Andrews, with a shade of sadness in her voice, as she took up some needlework, and drew near the light, where her husband sat with a newspaper in his hands, apparently reading. She had just returned from the chambers above, after seeing their three children safely in bed.

"Yes," repeated Mr. Andrews, gloomily; "on the last hours of the year."

"It has not been as happy a year as were the previous ones," said Mrs. Andrews. "You have had more trouble in business, and, somehow, things have been going wrong at home all the time. I don't know what's come over me, but little matters, that once had no power to disturb, now ruffle my feelings sadly. And, then, there's no concealing the fact, that the children grow more ungovernable every day; and what is worse, quarrel dreadfully among themselves."

Mr. Andrews made no reply, for the words of his wife brought up from the past images of home-scenes singu-

larly in contrast with the real things of the year just sighing out the last hours of its existence. No; home had not been as happy as during the previous years.

And why was this? There had been trouble in business, on the husband's side, and he had not always thrown the weight of care from his spirit at day's decline, and brought a cheerful heart and sunny countenance home with him. Yet he might have done this; for the trouble was such as ever comes with increasing business, and should have found a compensation in increasing gains. Had he wisely left the day's cares and perplexities at his place of business when the doors were shut at night, and let home-affections, and a loving interest in the treasured ones of his household, find their true activity, his presence would have been like warm sunshine, dispelling clouds and shadows. But, he was setting his heart upon the world, more and more, every day; and as worldly interests increased, care and anxiety increased also, for this is one of the penalties nearly all men pay for prosperity. He had met with some unexpected losses, and more than one carefully planned operation had entirely failed. This was the trouble in business to which his wife referred; and of which she had felt at home the disturbing influence. On her part, the trouble had also been experienced. She, too, was setting her heart on external things, and hoping to find therein rest and peace. The home in which, during the earlier years of her married life, she had enjoyed so much of real happiness, grown poor and mean in her eyes under the stronger light of opening prosperity, must needs be changed for one larger and more elegant.

Richer clothing, new and costly furniture, and many things for show succeeded, all absorbing her thoughts, and all bringing more or less disturbing influences.

In the choice of a new house, there had been a difference of opinion between Mrs. Andrews and her husband, resulting in much unhappiness on both sides. He preferred one part of the city, and she another; he a roomy, but not very costly house; she one of rather imposing appearance, more ornamental than comfortable. Her will was strongest, and her wishes prevailed. But, in the conquest, if it might so be called, she lost more than she gained; for she lost a portion of her husband's affection. And her heart's quick instincts were not long in discovering the fact.

The new house, new furniture, and new friends that suddenly sprung up, absorbed a large portion of Mrs. Andrews's time, as well as thoughts, to the neglect of her children, and loss of real comfort in the household. But neglected children are not passive subjects: nor neglect in matters of domestic comfort a thing of indifference. They will exist as painful realities; and this Mrs. Andrews soon proved, to her sorrow.

This, in brief, is a history of the year, in the waning light of which the husband and wife sat sighing over their disappointed hopes.

"Do you remember our first New Year's Eve?" said Mrs. Andrews, in a voice that some vivid recollection of the past had made tremulous with feeling. This was after a long silence.

For a few moments, her husband looked at her before

replying. Her question had thrown his thoughts back, and now the memory of a happier time was present.

“There have been none like it since, Anna.” The words were spoken earnestly, but sadly. “And yet,” he added, after a thoughtful silence, “this ought not to be. The years should grow brighter with sunshine; not darker with clouds. . Something is wrong. Why, as the time goes on, should the pressure of care grow heavier, and our spirits, that desire rest and peace, find the ocean of life more vexed with storms, as the ship advances? Yes, Anna, I do remember that first New Year’s Eve. Alas! how unlike the present!”

“We werê poorer in this world’s goods, but richer in feelings,” said Mrs. Andrews. “That dear little library! There was a charm about it, never found in any of our richer apartments. The heart’s warm sunshine fell all around it, and made every object beautiful.”

“Something is wrong.” Mr. Andrews repeated the words more earnestly. “If, since that first pleasant New Year’s Eve, the sky above us has grown colder, the path rougher, and our hearts sadder, we cannot be on the road to happiness. If, with every advancing step, the sunshine continues to fade, we must be on the road to darkness, and not light.”

“The light has grown dimmer, and yet we have been looking for the morning to break in brilliant sunshine!”

“Our external condition is improved,” said Mr. Andrews. “We have a better home, and my business has greatly enlarged; yet, neither of these changes has brought the anticipated pleasure. You are not as happy amid all these elegant surroundings, and I am less satis-

fied with large gains in business, than I was when my income reached scarcely a third of its present amount. Yes, yes, something is wrong, and it behooves us to look well to our ways. If these are the penalties we pay for an improved worldly condition, then wealth must be a curse, instead of a blessing."

"If we set our hearts upon it," replied Mrs. Andrews, "it will prove a curse. And, dear husband, may not our error lie just here?"

Mr. Andrews did not reply for some minutes, during which time thought was very busy. He then said,

"It does lie just where you say, Anna. I am building too much on the mere accumulation of wealth, as a means of happiness, and you are permitting your eyes to be dazzled by the surface-glitter of the world around you. We are placing our highest good in mere external things, to the almost total neglect of what is internal, and therefore more real. What are wealth and elegance? what are honour and reputation? what are fine houses and grand villas, if the heart be dissatisfied? If each returning New Year's Eve find us sadder than before, are we not living in vain?"

"Dear husband!" said Mrs. Andrews, "let us begin the New Year in a wiser and better life. Come home to me, as of old, leaving the world and its cares behind you; and I will strive, with an earnest spirit, to disperse all clouds, so that the sunshine may come in, as of old. Let us find, in every passing day, the treasure it brings to our door, and not lose the blessings we have, in a vain longing after some mere ideal good."

As they talked, the weight of sadness was lifted from

their spirits. Even in truer thoughts and better purposes, there comes a measure of peace to the troubled heart; how much more, if thought and purpose give birth to action!

The evening closed more brightly than it began. Peace fluttered again above their hearts, seeking therein a nestling-place.

“We will not forget the world within us, for the world without,” said Mr. Andrews, closing the pages of a book, in which he read aloud to his wife, as on their first New Year’s Eve; “the internal, for the external; the riches of mind and heart, for the wealth that perishes in the using. Our feet have gone astray; but we are not such distant wanderers from the right path, that we may not find it again!”

Have you wandered, like them, reader, from the pleasant ways of life! Have you made the external of more importance than the internal? If so, pause, as the year wanes, and resolve to begin the next in a wiser subordination of things natural and worldly, to things moral, intellectual, and spiritual. Doing so, you will find that, while you have seemed to see dimly, in the far distance, the beautiful garments of Peace, the fair goddess was knocking at the door of your heart, and vainly seeking an entrance.



## THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

WE do not know the origin of the following article. It is excellent:—

A certain individual, whom we shall call Bullard, was one of the most cross-grained and peevish of men. It was misery to be near him. He grumbled and snarled incessantly, and found fault with every one and everything around him. Nothing seemed to please him. He seemed to exist in one perpetual foment of irascible impatience, uncomfortable himself, and sowing the seeds of anger, fretfulness, and discord wherever he appeared. His home was especially unhappy. Bitter retorts and passionate invectives obtained dominant sway. He constantly railed at his wife, and she replied in the same unloving strain; the children quickly imbibed a like vindictive habit, until such a thing as a pleasant look or kindly word was never known among them.

One day Mr. Bullard was returning to his cheerless dwelling, more feverish in temper than was his wont, in consequence of some disappointment, ready to vent his angry spleen upon his family as soon as he arrived. If the supper was not ready to sit down to at the very moment, he would almost turn the house upside down, and strike his wife to the quick with his taunting complaints. But chancing to approach a little sunny-haired girl, whose mild blue eyes and loving face were such a picture of bursting kindness as he had never seen before, an incident occurred which effected a complete revolu-

tion in his peevish frame of mind and planted a new feeling in his turbulent breast. The girl, and one, evidently her older brother, were playing with a small carriage; and, suddenly turning near a stone step, she accidentally struck the carriage against one corner, and broke it into atoms. In a passionate burst of anger, the boy advanced, and struck his sister a severe blow in the face with his clinched hand, and stamped his feet in a tempest of fury upon the ground.

But, instead of returning the blow and revengeful speech, after an involuntary cry of pain, the noble girl laid her hand gently on her brother's arm, and looking sorrowfully into his flushed face, softly said, "Oh, brother Tom! I did not think you would do that." In a moment, as if stung by a hot iron, the boy shrunk back, and hung his head in shame and conscience-stricken pain. Then he said, "Forgive me, dear Helen! I will never do it again." And scarce had the penitent words left his lips, when his sister's arms were thrown around his neck, and forgiveness sobbed on his breast. Here was a lesson for Bullard! At first he was quite stunned by it; he could not understand it. It was something utterly beyond his philosophy. But he felt that it had somehow done him good. Bit by bit, as he proceeded on, his own angry feelings vanished, till he felt more calm and kindly than he had done for years. Yea, he was softened to his heart's core, and he felt something very like moisture springing to his eyes.

Little noting the wonderful change which had taken place in her husband's temper, Mrs. Bullard was dreading his arrival home, for supper was not near ready, and



she had had the misfortune to burn the cakes she had baked for that meal. And the children, copying from her, were unusually cross and bad. In vain she had scolded and whipped them; they only snarled and struck each other, and almost drove her distracted with their quarrelling confusion.

Mr. Bullard entered, and whatever could be the matter, Mrs. Bullard could scarcely give credit to her senses. Instead of dashing the door behind him in a pettish crash, and stamping his way forward to the kitchen, he took the crying baby from its bed, and hushed it with the softest and most endearing words he had ever used. And his face had a smile on it—a real, kind, sunshiny smile. What strange wonder was this? Mrs. Bullard was, at first, struck quite dumb with astonishment, and the children stared at their changed father as if at a loss to make the mystery out. He spoke, and actually said, “My dear Mary, is supper nearly ready? I’m as hungry as a hunter!” Their wonder increased more and more. The children hardly seemed assured whether it was their father or not; and Mrs. Bullard scarcely knew whether to believe in the evidence of her eyes and ears. But the change was real. Already a blessed feeling diffused through the family circle, like unto the falling of the morning dew, or the fragrant breath of summer flowers. At first, hesitatingly, Mrs. Bullard replied—“Supper will be ready directly. But I am so sorry these cakes are burned. Must Willie run to the bakery for a loaf?” “No, never mind,” returned Mr. Bullard, “we can scrape off the burned part, and then they will taste as well as need be.”

And taste as well they did, and better than cakes had tasted in the Bullard dwelling for a long time before. Not one jarring speech marred the pleasantness of that happy meal. Mr. Bullard's kindly speech and smiling face had descended to his wife, and from both became reflected in their children. The house looked brighter. The beautiful mantle of cheerfulness had fallen on it, and there was unutterable music in the very ticking of the old clock. Mrs. Bullard cried with delight, when she saw the baby crowing in its smiling father's lap; and he promised, if the elder ones would be good, to take them on a nice walk with him on the next Sabbath day. And she resolved never more to speak a peevish or angry word again, if constant watchfulness could prevent their utterance, but retain the peaceful happiness which only kind words and smiles can bring. A happy influence, too, was exerted on the children. They no longer saw peevishness and anger in their parents; and gradually, but surely, lost it in themselves. And Mr. Bullard, whenever he felt his old bad feelings rising up to find an outer vent, called to mind the conduct of the blue-eyed girl, and resolutely crushed them down.

Reader, believe us, kind words are the brightest flowers of earth's existence; they make a very paradise of the humblest home the world can show. Use them, and especially round the fireside circle. They are jewels beyond price, and more precious to heal the wounded heart, and make the weighed-down spirit glad, than all other blessings the earth can give.

## “O U R P E T.”

**W**e have a little favourite,  
The fairest of all things ;  
Should you see her, you would call her  
A cherub without wings ;  
Or a fairy, bird, or blossom—  
You may call her what you will,  
To each she bears resemblance,  
But herself is better still.

Her hair is soft and golden,  
As the petals of a flower ;  
Her eyes, the blue forget-me-not  
In summer's softest hour ;  
Her voice is low and joyous  
As the warble of a bird ;  
Her step, like rustling blossoms,  
By evening zephyrs stirred.

Her motions are the fairy's,  
So full of witching grace,  
And you read her guileless nature  
In the sunshine of her face.  
A pretty April blossom,  
A bright bird of the wild,  
A fairy or a cherub,  
She yet is but a child.

**Y**ou should see our little Alice  
In her robe of lily white,  
As she steals about on tip-toe  
To kiss us all “good-night.”

Should see her clasp her dimpled hands,  
 Beside her little chair,  
 And with tongue that falters often,  
 Lisp out her little prayer.

You should see,—but I'd forgotten,  
 It is only "our sweet pet,"  
 To others but a common child,  
 To glance at, and forget.  
 A child! a free, glad-hearted child;  
 Has earth a thing more fair?  
 Holds Heaven a richer treasure,  
 Than the bright ones gathered there?



### THANKSGIVING.

"THERE, I am thankful!" exclaimed Mrs. Everett, as she seated herself at her very inviting tea-table, on the evening previous to our New England festival. The cloth was of dazzling whiteness; the tea service, though not costly, of glittering purity; and her own matronly figure was very becomingly arrayed. Yet the good lady was manifestly thinking of something above and beneath this agreeable picture, of which she was the successful artist; for she immediately added, "For the first time since we were married, Thanksgiving will find us with a house in perfect order, from attic to cellar."

Mrs. Everett had been a housekeeper for fifteen years, yet the statement she had just made was literally true. Blame her not too severely. The task of keeping a domestic establishment in faultless condition is one re-

quiring if not the strength of a Hercules, yet a far higher degree of minute and patient care than any of his world-famous achievements. Mrs. Everett had rightly stated the order of her improvements, for she had begun with the superstructure, and had but just reached the foundation of the temple of domestic comfort. Pride and poverty were her only dowry when she wedded, and having been for years dependent upon wealthy relatives, she had acquired a taste for expensive luxuries, and a love of display that was not very consistently manifested. The household duties were performed at first with the aid of one very young and inexperienced domestic, and while the tasteful fingers of the mistress wrought ottomans and other fancy articles for the parlour, the poor little maid presided with sorry dignity over a very slatternly kitchen cabinet. Mr. Everett had been slightly epicurean in his tastes, but this trait of character soon vanished before the daily abominations that were the results of her juvenile administration. His wardrobe, too, experienced some neglect. His clean linen, when such he wore, sometimes protruded from the elbow of his coat, and embroidered slippers were an indifferent apology for his very disreputable hose.

The residence of the Everetts was in a flourishing village, which boasted a fair supply of *soi-disant* aristocracy, within whose charmed circle it was Mrs. Everett's chief ambition to gain admittance. Yet for some years her very zeal to compass this end defeated itself, for while she received very few calls at home, she sent daily into the street a placard, on which some of her grossest

failings were advertised—even her good husband, with his unbrushed coat, soiled linen, and ragged gloves.

“Why have you never called upon Mrs. Everett?” asked Mrs. Leslie, one day, of Mrs. Grant. (Both ladies were decidedly of the upper ten.) “I have met her several times, and she seems to me to possess some taste and cultivation. She is very skilful in needlework, and she showed me a drawing, which, when finished, will be positively an ornament to any parlour.”

“I know very little of the lady in question,” replied Mrs. Grant; “but I think her needle is not very frequently employed upon her husband’s clothes; he is decidedly the shabbiest-looking man in the whole street.”

“That may be his own fault, perhaps.”

“It probably is so in part, but not altogether; and although I have seen none of Mrs. Everett’s paintings, yet in passing her door I have repeatedly caught glimpses of *tableaux vivants* of a very uninviting description.”

The good-natured apologist was silent.

Within the first five years of her married life, Mrs. Everett became the happy mother of three beautiful little girls, and again her nimble fingers were busied with trimmings and embroideries, to enable the darlings to appear in public like those who she fondly hoped might be their future associates. If her husband remonstrated, she reminded him that this finery cost him very little. It did, however, cost him a large deduction from his personal comforts during many weary years.

Time rolled on, and a lucky combination of circumstances procured the Everetts the honour of dining at Mr. Leslie’s, with some very agreeable guests. Alas,



that our gratified desires should always give birth to new ones! Mrs. Everett thenceforward sighed perpetually for damask napkins and silver forks. It was vain to speak of limited means; she knew a remedy for that evil. There was a book-binding in the vicinity, and she and her girls might acquire in a quiet way, by folding and stitching, a sum quite sufficient for their purpose. Her husband sighed in secret, but he knew that remonstrance was in vain. The task was commenced, and well nigh accomplished;—they were, indeed, at their last day's work, with the household more neglected than ever, when, oh, horror! Mr. Leslie called upon important business. The child who admitted him gratified his expressed wish to see her mother, by taking him directly to the kitchen, and his quick eye took in at a glance the whole condition of the premises. Mrs. Everett received him with a face of scarlet, but she was too proud to apologize, and indeed apology was useless.

After this unpleasant interruption, the mortified group returned to their task with flagging fingers; yet it was in due time completed, and the intended purchases made. They felt, however, that they had paid a heavy price in the loss of comfort and self-respect, and of that very reputation which they were so anxious to maintain. Another misfortune followed. A malicious neighbour, who envied Mrs. Everett her empty and unsatisfied ambition (what will not mortals envy!), gave vent to her bitterness by circulating a calumnious report. The scandal was unfounded, for, to do justice to our aspiring friend, it was only in the minor morals that she was deficient. Yet, during the prevalence of the rumour,

she was kindly informed that Mr. Leslie had said on hearing it, "I dislike to encourage scandal, but I can believe almost anything of a woman whose public attire is fresh and faultless, yet who honours her fireside with soiled dress, neglected teeth, and dusty hair, quite in keeping with the surrounding scene."

The public were soon undeceived with regard to the calumny, but Mrs. Everett never forgot that her real errors had lent a colouring to the statement. She felt that, like the wife of Cæsar, she should have been above suspicion. She perceived that she had missed the substance in pursuing a shadow, and with characteristic energy she resolved on an immediate reform. She determined thenceforward to devote her first attention to her domestic duties, leaving her social position to find its own natural level. A thorough in-doors revolution was what she aimed at, and she found a pleasure in the task that compensated her for the loss of some ambitious visions.

Circumstances favoured her. She was in the prime of life, with three budding daughters, who inherited her own force of character; and their united energies, once rightly directed, were speedily followed by gratifying results. The husband gave his cordial support to the new order of things, and as day by day some time-honoured nuisance of the establishment disappeared, he regained his cheerfulness, and was even betrayed into acts of unwonted liberality.

At length the new purpose was achieved. Thanksgiving Eve had arrived, and throughout those regenerated premises, "from a thread even to a shoe-latchet,"



nothing was misplaced or neglected. We will now leave the household to enjoy the charm of their novel and interesting position, for although we know not their Thursday's bill of fare, we doubt not its luxuries will be fully enjoyed by calm and thankful hearts.

Sweet sisters mine, there are many of us who have erred, more or less, after the fashion of Mrs. Everett. If, under less favourable circumstances, we cannot hope for complete success in our endeavours to reform, let us all do something more for those whose comfort depends upon our fidelity, and resolve that, in some respects at least, our domestic circles shall have cause for a future perpetual thanksgiving.



## HOME.

Is there any other word in the vocabulary of nations that is so expressive, so suggestive, so gentle, and so important in its wide signification as that which heads our article? Home! What a talisman it is—what a spell, what an invocation! Is there any heart, old or young, that does not beat responsive to the sound of that one word? Is there any brain so dull into which it does not flash with a gush of suggestive congruous fascinations? We have all had a home. Perhaps we have not all got one; but we have certainly all had one. Change of time and circumstances may have so buffeted us about the great world, that we feel too cosmopolitan; and in an easy adaptation to all places, and to all sorts of men,

we lose that home-feeling which makes some spot an individuality, as it were, which nothing else shall be like. Perhaps there are many who, with a philosophic reach above common feeling, hold aloof from the domesticity of society, and with a self-inflicted Pariahism, if we may be allowed the expression, will not be of a home homely; but these are the eccentricities of human nature. We speak of, and we speak to the masses, and to them we say, you have all homes, or you had all homes.

All men, then, have lost a home, are trying to make a home, or are striving to keep one that they have. Everybody has his or her ideal of somewhere, or some place of rest, of complete satisfaction, where the roar and the din of the great world may not enter, or if heard at all, would be esteemed for its contrast to the serenity within—a home, in fact, for without serenity there is no home. We used to think, in our very young days, that the highest title that man could give to man was, his most *serene* highness; and we now think that a man who is happy in his home, at his own fireside, with the partner of his heart smiling gently upon him, and his little children looking like shining content (as some author has it), is to all intents and purposes a *serene highness*. If such a one be not, why, then, as Othello says, “chaos has come again.”

Let us look at that busy merchant upon the mart of nations—fire in his eye, keen calculation in every muscle of his face, his brow tinted with something of the colour of the yellow ore he struggles and pants for. He has his moments when with moistened eyes and faint sighs he thinks of his childhood's home, of his father's fire-

side; and when there will rise up before him the dim spectral band of past companions, of past affections—his mother's tender glance, his father's counsel, the playful tenderness of a sister's love; and in comparison with that lost home, not lost through fault or folly of his, but swallowed up in the vortex of time, he will for the moment think lightly of his bills, and bonds, and balances, his usuries, and his cash accounts; and his dream will be yet to make a home where there shall be smiles and peace.

For what is it that yonder pale student consumes the midnight oil? Is it for fame? The empty applause of those whom in his heart of hearts he holds but cheaply? Ah! no—he is striving for a home. He pictures to himself the vine-clad porch of some simple cottage, and himself upon the threshold, with the hand of her whom he loves in his, and all the world beyond them banished from their contemplation. These men, then, are striving to make a home. They may never reach the goal of their ambition. They may, when the harbour of refuge is within their sight, sink fainting by the way: or they may find that habit is as strong as this first aspirator after a home, and they go on then striving until the grave closes the account, and gives them a quiet home, indeed. But still they have happiness in the pursuit, if to them it were but an ignus fatuus which they never much cared to reach.

Some are battling to regain a lost home. They have had the blessing, and treated it like a bauble, until it slipped from them, only then showing itself to them, as the shadows of adverse circumstances roll between them

and it, what a jewel they have lost; and home is something akin to love, in the respect that once lost, it is not easily recovered again. But such persons will commence their pursuit, and through the crowds of humanity, as though feasibly looking for some remembered but lost face, they will search for another home like unto the one that has left them.

Home is the revivifying spell that braces many a heart to do its duty. The mariner, on the wide ocean, as he clings to the frail spar that is alone between him and eternity, thinks of his home, and his grasp tightens, for he feels that the spirit of that holy word has given him strength. The soldier, upon the scorching plains of India, dreams of a home at last in his native land; and as the watch-fire pales at his feet, he smiles as the vision of his native village rises before his mind's eye. The veriest vagrant that begs from door to door has his home, if it be but some deserted hovel into which to crawl at night, when the blasting wind is high and mighty. The home-spell is around and about us all. Give the raggedest urchin you can find in this great city an alms of unwonted amount, and ten to one but he shuffles home with it. The profane and vulgar are accustomed, when they wish that any rude blusterer, upon a public occasion, should be quiet, to advise him to "go home." Even they know that home is the kingdom of the heart; and in the thatched cottage, through which the hollow wind whistles, as well as in the gorgeous palatial pile, redolent of warmth and perfumes, the home-spell lingers, and there is no place like it.

A happy home! Oh, what a spell there is in the

words! Can human ambition point to a higher hope than that, unless it abandons this great sphere and fixes its gaze upon immortality? And after all, what is immortality, and the God-like hope of Christianity, but a happy home for ever? Is there anything in the wide world so gracious to the heart as the home fireside? Home voices, their sights and sounds? Home tears ever have in them a redeeming joy that makes them all but celestial!

The man who with humble means and quiet wishes, the man with a mind attuned to the harmonies, and to the beauties of nature, who has a home, where envy and unthankfulness find no place, where dear domestic love and gentleness are the presiding angels, is indeed a Serene Highness; and long may he continue so, and may our happy country be ever celebrated as the land of Home and Hearts!

---

## PRAISE AMONG THE MARRIED.

YES, among the married. Why should they not speak kindly of each other? the voice of commendation is sweet, doubly sweet from the lips of those we love. It chills the best feelings, weakens the highest aspirations when continuous and sacrificing effort calls forth no kindly return—no words of cheer, of encouragement. The snow is ever unimpressible in the deep, hollow, recesses of the mountain cliff, where no straggling beam of merry sunshine melts it with kisses; cold and white

it sleeps in perpetual shadow, till its soft roundness congeals into ice. And so the heart, if forced to abide in the shadow of frowns, under the continual dropping of hard, unkindly words, will assimilate itself to its mate, and become a sad and listless heart, lying heavily and cold in the bosom that should be all filled with glowing sympathies.

Husbands often do not know with what ceaseless solicitude the duties of a wife and mother are accompanied. They leave home early, many of them; the routine of business, the same as it was yesterday, and will be months to come, is so thoroughly digested that the performance is measurably without annoyance. They have no heavy or wearing household work to do, no fretting little ones hanging on to their garments, now to nurse, now to correct, now to instruct, while still the dusting, and the cleansing, and the preparing of food, must be going on, and the little garments must be nicely fitted and made, or all would be untidiness and confusion. Yet how many an adroit manager contrives to get through with all this, willing—if she is but appreciated, and her valuable services esteemed—to endure, calmly, the trials incident to her lot, keeping care from her pleasant face by a merry spirit and cheerful demeanour.

But if she never hears the kindly “I thank you,” or beholds the beautiful smile that unuttered gratitude spreads upon the countenance of him for whom she has forsaken all, what immeasurable anguish will she not experience?

We have often thought how poignant must be the grief, how heavy the disappointment of the young wife,



when she first learns that the husband of her choice is totally indifferent to her studied efforts to please. He has many times, in former days, praised the glossy beauty of her sunny hair, and curled its rings of gold around his fingers. He has gazed in her face until it is stamped upon the tablets of his heart, yet, through utter thoughtlessness, he forgets now that it has been such a talisman of goodness and purity to him, or old associations have made him too much their own, to play the lover after the solemn words of ceremony are spoken. He has given her his honour, and a home; his name, his means; what more can she want?

Gayly as the bird upon the tree by her doorside, does she go carolling about her work. The day seems one long year—but still, twilight *does* come, and she awaits the return of her husband. He has perhaps but slender resources; he is a labouring man, and their cottage is humble and low-roofed. How light is her step; how happy her brow! Like a skilful painter she has touched and re-touched all the slender luxuries of her home, till they seem to her like the adornings of a paradise. She has taste, refinement, a quick perception of the delicate and beautiful, though mayhap she never has plied her needle at worsted tapestry, traced the outlines of a single tree or flower, or elicited sweet sounds from harp or piano.

The hearth is bright and red—not a speck of dust is visible. She has brought out all her hoarded wealth, and the tables, the new-varnished bureau, and the arm-chair back, shine in snowy garniture. She has placed the little pictures in the best light, hung up the wide

sample—her child-work at school—made all things look cheerful and bright, placed a bouquet of brilliant flowers upon the neat supper-table, and another in the little fireplace, and with pleasant anticipations she awaits his return.

“How cheerful everything looks!” she murmurs; “and how pleased he will be! he will commend my care and taste.”

Presently the well-known step draws near; she flies with a happy smile to meet him, and together they enter their mutual home.

What! no sign of surprise? no new delight on his features!

Does he receive all her attention, as a matter of course? something looked for, expected, easily done, and without price? Can he not pay her the tribute of a glad smile? Alas! he does not believe in praise; his wife must be disinterested; must look upon these performances as stern duties; if he praise now, and forget to praise again, they may be discontinued.

She is disappointed, chagrined; and unless taste and perfect neatness are indispensable to her own comfort, she gradually wearies in well-doing, when a little kindly encouragement, a little praise, might have stimulated her to constant exertion.

Many a wife becomes careless of her appearance because of her husband's indifference. Now, in the simple matter of dress—not so simple, either—how often men think it beneath their notice to approve the choice of their companions! We once remarked to a gentleman, that his wife displayed most admirable taste in her attire,



and what think you was his answer? With a sigh we record it: "Has she? well, now, I should hardly know whether she had on a wash-gown or a satin dress." We involuntarily disliked him; and thought that the expression upon the countenance of his partner spoke volumes.

Now we do like to see a husband notice such things, even to particularity. We like to hear him give his opinion as to whether such and such a thing is becoming to his wife. We are pleased to see a father interested in the little purchases of his children, one who never says with a frown, "Oh! go away; I don't care for such things; suit yourselves."

And in household concerns the husband should express his approbation of neatness and order; he should be grateful for any little effort that may have been put forth to add to his comfort or pleasure; he should commend the good graces of his wife, and at fitting times make mention of them. Indeed, not one alone, but both should reciprocate the good offices of the other. We never esteemed a woman the less on hearing her say, "I have a good husband;" we never thought a man wanting in dignity who spoke of his wife as being dear to him, or quoted her amiability or industry as worthy of example before others. Who does not esteem the unaffected praise of a husband or a wife, above that of all others? No motive but love induces either to

"Speak the gentle words  
That sink into the heart."

Solomon says, "Her husband he praiseth her;" and only the morose and reserved, who care not to fill the

fount of kindness by pleasant words, differ from the sacred writer.

How many a home have we seen glittering with splendour; where glowing marble, from Italia's clime, gives a silent welcome to the entering guest; where on the walls hang votive offerings of art that fill the whole soul with their beauty; where the carpets yield to the lightest pressure, and the rich hangings crimson the palest cheek! Yet amidst all this show and adorning has the proud wife sat, the choicest piece of furniture there—for so her husband regards her. Formal and stern, he has thrown around her the drapery of his chill heart, and it has folded about her like marble. She is "my lady," and nothing more. No outbursts of affection in the form of sweet praise fall upon her ears—yet pendants of diamonds drop therefrom, but their shining is like his love, costly and cold. We have heard such a one say, in times gone by, "all this wealth, all this show and pride of station would I resign, for one word of praise from my husband. He never relaxes from the loftiness which has made him feared among men; he never speaks to me but with measured accents, though he surrounds me with luxuries."

We wondered not that a stifled sob closed the sentence; who had not rather live in a cottage, through which the winds revel and the raindrops fall, with one in whose heart dwell impulses the holiest in our nature, one who is not ashamed or afraid to give fitting commendation, than in the most gorgeous of earthly palaces, with a companion whose lips are sealed for ever to the expression of fondness, sympathy, and praise?

## THE ART OF LIVING EASY.

“ I CAN’T see, for my life, how you get along so easy, Mrs. Jones,” said merry Ellen, to her mother’s nearest neighbour; “ your family is larger than ours, and you have less help—but you are always in time. Come when I will, I find things in good order—no bustle, fuss, or confusion. Now, we are all work from morning till night, at our house, and our work is never done. There must be witch-work about it—some secret—do tell us, won’t you?”

“ Why, Ellen, I don’t know that there is any great secret about it; all I can tell is, I don’t seem to work very hard, but somehow I do get along very easy, as you say, with all that seems to fall to my lot.”

“ Well, we all know that, Mrs. Jones, and we know, too, that you do more reading and writing than any of the rest of us, and visit the sick more, and find time for everything that is good—oh, there is, and you must tell me all about it.”

“ Yes, Ellen, I will tell you all I know about it, for you’re real smart, and will make a first-rate wife for Fred some day; but you must first promise to try and make my secret of practical use to yourself, and teach everybody else.”

Ellen blushed, and almost wished she had not been so impertinent. But Ellen was a good, sensible girl, and was impressed with the idea that Fred would want a wife somewhat resembling his mother in domestic mat-

ters ; so she stooped down and tied her shoe, to hide her confusion. Mrs. Jones laid down the cheese-knife (for it was early in the morning), took up her babe, which her kind heart and arms had taken home, and picked up a basket of green peas that were to be shelled for dinner, and sat down to nurse her little orphan to sleep, take the peas out of the pod, and tell her story.

“ Well, Ellen, my secret is just this :—When I go out to shake the table-cloth, I always bring in a stick of wood ; seldom take two steps where one will answer, and try to do everything the shortest way. I pulverize saleratus enough to last a month at one time, keep it in a convenient vessel, and then it is always ready for use—no untying papers and scattering the floor and cupboard ; no table, rolling-pin, or mortar to clear but once. Instead of beating my eggs with a knife or spoon, I have a whip made of wire, bent in an oblong shape like a tassel, and tied with a bit of twine to a hickory handle, and I can beat the whites of six eggs to a standing form in two minutes as easily as you will in half an hour with a knife. Anybody can make an egg-whip that can whittle a stick, or find a piece of wire, if they cannot afford to buy one. I only mention these things as samples of time-saving. But if you will not be offended, I will tell you a little story.”

“ Offended ! Not I. It’s the silliest thing in the world to get offended, particularly at those who wish to do us good. The doctor often has to administer unpleasant drugs to effect a cure.”

“ Well then, Ellen, I was out taking tea with a neighbour last week, and we went into the milk room and

cheese room to see the cheese; and as we came back we stopped a few minutes to chat in the kitchen. The lady told the girl she might make some flannel cakes, or griddle cakes, as some call them, for tea. She started off on the bound to do her duty. First she ran down cellar and brought up the buttermilk jar, holding almost a pailful; then she ran back for the eggs, untied a half pound of saleratus, scattered a spoonful on the floor and another on the table, rolled it and tied it up; next turned her buttermilk out and spattered a new dress all about the waist, splashed it over the table on divers things, said "Oh, pshaw!" picked up the saleratus from the floor, cleaned her dress, and brought a plate, and ran to the meal room, and came back with a heaping plate of flour, put it into the pan and stirred away, back and forth, till it was all submerged and all lumps. There was not flour enough; away she ran again, brought more; there was still not enough, and the third journey had to be made; in it was dashed, and she stirred away till her face glowed like a peony. All at once she thought of her eggs, and broke them into the batter. She had forgotten the salt, and ran the fourth time into the meal room. Now her batter was too thick, and more buttermilk had to be used, and consequently the saleratus paper had to undergo another operation. Finally, after much labour and toil, and an expenditure of much time, and waste of material, the lumpy batter was ready for use. But here was a new trouble: the fire that was just right half an hour before, was now exhausted; the griddle which had been set upon the stove in the beginning, burned rough, the kitchen and ante-room full of

the unpleasant smoke and odour of burnt grease—the cakes stuck fast to the iron—two messes were wasted before the griddle could be rubbed smooth; the dish cloths were in sad plight, and the young lady had expended as much actual labour as would have prepared the whole meal, set the table and all.”

“Oh dear! that was me; anybody might know the picture! But how would you have managed?”

“I should have taken my pan and spoon, put my saleratus into the pan, gone down cellar, and with my cup, which I keep in the jar for that purpose, dipped the buttermilk, without spattering it, into my pan; then broke the eggs carefully into the milk; gone from there to the meal room and sifted the proper quantity of flour in, and stirred it carefully, thus beating the eggs while I stirred in the flour; dropped in a little salt and returned to the kitchen, all in five minutes, without having one thing out of place, except the egg-shells, and those I should have removed some other time. So you see instead of four journeys to the cellar, two to carry back, and four to the meal room, I should have done the whole work, saved my strength, saved the wear and tear of my shoes, saved the soil of my dress, saved the fire, the annoyance, and a good half-hour for something else, and had a better mess of cakes for supper in the bargain. And this is only one half-hour saved in getting supper, by one hand. It took three that night longer to get tea, by one-half, than it would have taken me to have got it alone.

“But, la me! here’s the baby fast asleep—the peas are all shelled, and my story must be wound up, for it’s



time to 'wey off the curd.' If this bit of experience does you any good, I will tell you another story some

day



## OH, SING TO ME SOFTLY, MY SISTER.

Oh! sing to me softly, my sister,  
And smile on me, darling, to-night,  
For my soul is encompassed by darkness,  
And shut from the kingdom of light!

I walk in life's valley of shadows,  
Where the fountain's low murmurs are still,  
Where swiftly through gray mist and vapour,  
Are gliding pale phantoms of ill.

Thy voice, like the clear thread of silver,  
That winds through the still grassy lane,  
Shall steal through my heart's silent chambers,  
And waken their music again.

Far away from the clouds of the present,  
In the Eden of memory's isle,  
What visions of peace and of beauty,  
Shall my spirit of sadness beguile!

Once more I will rove with sweet fancies,  
And think the sweet thoughts of a child,  
Once more I will gather Youth's roses,  
The fairer because they are wild.

And the light which I know is immortal,  
That shone on young life's dewy hour,  
Shall steal from its crystalline portal,  
And brighten fair memory's bower.

Then sing to me softly, my sister,  
And pour out thy heart in the strain,  
Fill I dream that the beautiful voices  
Of childhood are singing again.

So my heart shall grow better and purer,  
And strength to us both shall be given,  
To work out a priceless salvation,  
And sing with our children in Heaven!



## AN EVENING AT HOME.

“NOT going to the ball!” said Mrs. Lindley, with a look and tone of surprise. “What has come over the girl?”

“I don’t know, but she says she’s not going.”

“Doesn’t her ball dress fit?”

“Yes, beautifully.”

“What is the matter, then?”

“Indeed, ma, I cannot tell. You had better go up and see her. It is the strangest notion in the world. Why, you couldn’t hire me to stay at home.”

Mrs. Lindley went up stairs, and entering her daughter’s room, found her sitting on the side of the bed, with a beautiful ball dress in her hand.

“It isn’t possible, Helen, that you are not going to this ball?” she said.

Helen looked up with a half-serious, half-smiling expression on her face.

“I’ve been trying, for the last half hour,” she replied.



"to decide whether I ought to go or stay at home. I think, perhaps, I ought to remain at home."

"But what earthly reason can you have for doing so? Don't you like your dress?"

"O yes! very much. I think it beautiful."

"Doesn't it fit you?"

"As well as any dress I ever had."

"Are you not well?"

"Very well."

"Then why not go to the ball? It will be the largest and most fashionable of the season. You know that your father and myself are both going. We shall want to see you there, of course. Your father will require some very good reason for your absence."

Helen looked perplexed at her mother's last remark.

"Do you think father will be displeased if I remain at home?" she asked.

"I think he will, unless you can satisfy him that your reason for doing so is a very good one. Nor shall I feel that you are doing right. I wish all my children to act under the government of a sound judgment. Impulse, or reasons not to be spoken of freely to their parents, should in no case influence their actions."

Helen sat thoughtful for more than a minute, and then said, her eyes growing dim as she spoke,

"I wish to stay at home for Edward's sake."

"And why for his, my dear?"

"He doesn't go to the ball, you know."

"Because he is too young, and too backward. You couldn't hire him to go there. But that is no reason why you should remain at home. You would never par-

take of any social amusement, were this always to influence you. Let him spend the evening in reading. He must not expect his sisters to deny themselves all recreation in which he cannot or will not participate."

"He does not. I know he would not hear to such a thing as my staying at home on his account."

"Then why stay?"

"Because I feel that I ought to do so. This is the way I have felt all day whenever I have thought of going. If I were to go, I know that I would not have a moment's enjoyment. He need not know why I remain at home. To tell him that I did not wish to go will satisfy his mind."

"I shall not urge the matter, Helen," Mrs. Lindley said, after a silence of some moments. "You are old enough to judge in a matter of this kind for yourself. But, I must say, I think you rather foolish. You will not find Edward disposed to sacrifice so much for you."

"Of that I do not think, mother. Of that I ought not to think."

"Perhaps not. Well, you may do as you like. But I don't know what your father will say."

Mrs. Lindley then left the room.

Edward Lindley was at the critical age of eighteen; that period when many young men, especially those who have been blessed with sisters, would have highly enjoyed a ball. But Edward was shy, timid, and bashful in company, and could hardly ever be induced to go out to parties with his sisters. Still, he was intelligent for his years, and companionable. His many good qualities

endeared him to his family, and drew forth from his sisters towards him a very tender regard.

Among his male friends were several about his own age, members of families with whom his own was on friendly terms. With these he associated frequently, and, with two or three others, quite intimately. For a month or two Helen noticed that one or another of these young friends called every now and then for Edward, in the evening, and that he went out with them and stayed until bedtime. But, unless his sisters were from home, he never went of his own accord. The fact of his being out with these young men, had, from the first, troubled Helen; though, the reason of her feeling troubled she could not tell. Edward had good principles, and she could not bring herself to entertain fears of any clearly defined evil. Still a sensation of uneasiness was always produced when he was from home in the evening.

Her knowing that Edward would go out, after they had all left, was the reason why Helen did not wish to attend the ball. The first thought of this had produced an unpleasant sensation in her mind, which increased the longer she debated the question of going away or remaining at home. Finally, she decided that she would not go. This decision took place after the interview with her mother, which was only half an hour from the time of starting.

Edward knew nothing of the intention of his sister. He was in his own room, dressing to go out, and supposed, when he heard the carriage drive from the door, that Helen had gone with the other members of the family. On descending to the parlour, he was surprised

to find her sitting by the centre-table, with a book in her hand.

“Helen! Is this you? I thought you had gone to the ball! Are you not well?” he said quickly and with surprise, coming up to her side.

“I am very well, brother,” she replied, looking into his face with a smile of sisterly regard. “But I have concluded to stay at home this evening. I’m going to keep you company.”

“Are you, indeed! Right glad am I of it! though I am sorry you have deprived yourself of the pleasure of this ball, which, I believe, is to be a very brilliant one. I was just going out, because it is so dull at home when you are all away.”

“I am not particularly desirous of going to the ball. So little so, that the thought of your being left here all alone had sufficient influence over me to keep me away.”

“Indeed! Well, I must say you are kind,” Edward returned, with feeling. The self-sacrificing act of his sister had touched him sensibly.

Both Helen and her brother played well. She upon the harp and piano, and he upon the flute and violin. Both were fond of music, and practised and played frequently together. Part of the evening was spent in this way, much to the satisfaction of each. Then an hour passed in reading and conversation, after which, music was again resorted to. Thus lapsed the time pleasantly until the hour for retiring came, when they separated, both with an internal feeling of pleasure more delightful than they had experienced for a long time. It was

nearly three o'clock before Mr. and Mrs. Lindley, and the daughter who had accompanied them to the ball, came home. Hours before, the senses of both Edward and Helen had been locked in forgetfulness.

Time passed on. Edward Lindley grew up and became a man of sound principles—a blessing to his family and society. He saw his sisters well married; and he himself, finally, led to the altar a lovely maiden. She made him a truly happy husband. On the night of his wedding, as he sat beside Helen, he paused for some time, in the midst of a pleasant conversation, thoughtfully. At last he said,

“Do you remember, sister, the night you stayed home from the ball to keep me company?”

“That was many years ago. Yes, I remember it very well, now you have recalled it to my mind.”

“I have often since thought, Helen,” he said, with a serious air, “that by the simple act of thus remaining at home for my sake, you were the means of saving me from destruction.”

“How so?” asked the sister.

“I was just then beginning to form an intimate association with young men of my own age, nearly all of whom have since turned out badly. I did not care a great deal about their company: still, I liked society, and used to be with them frequently—especially when you and Mary went out in the evening. On the night of the ball to which you were going, these young men had a supper, and I was to have been with them. I did not wish particularly to join them, but preferred doing so to remaining at home alone. To find you, as I did,

so unexpectedly, in the parlour, was an agreeable surprise indeed. I stayed at home with a new pleasure, which was heightened by the thought, that it was your love for me that had made you deny yourself for my gratification. We read together on that evening, we played together, we talked of many things. In your mind I had never before seen so much to inspire my own with high and pure thoughts. I remembered the conversation of the young men with whom I had been associating, and in which I had taken pleasure, with something like disgust. It was low, sensual, and too much of it vile and demoralizing. Never, from that hour, did I join them. Their way, even in the early stage of life's journey, I saw to be downward, and downward it has ever since been tending. How often since have I thought of that point in time, so full-fraught with good and evil influences! Those few hours spent with you seemed to take scales from my eyes. I saw with a new vision. I thought and felt differently. Had you gone to the ball, and I to meet those young men, no one can tell what might not have been the consequences. Sensual indulgences, carried to excess, amid songs and sentiments calculated to awaken evil instead of good feelings, might have stamped upon my young and delicate mind a bias to low affections that never would have been eradicated. That was the great starting-point in life—the period when I was coming into a state of rationality and freedom. The good prevailed over the evil, and by the agency of my sister, as an angel sent by the Author of all benefits to save me."

Like Helen Lindley, let every elder sister be thought-



ful of her brothers at that critical period in life, when the boy is about passing up to the stage of manhood, and she may save them from many a snare set for their unwary feet by the evil one. In closing this little sketch, we can say nothing better than has already been said by an accomplished American authoress, Mrs. Ferrar.

“So many temptations,” she says, “beset young men, of which young women know nothing, that it is of the utmost importance that your brothers’ evenings should be happily passed at home, that their friends should be your friends, that their engagements should be the same as yours, and that various innocent amusements should be provided for them in the family circle. Music is an accomplishment chiefly valuable as a home enjoyment, as rallying round the piano the various members of a family, and harmonizing their hearts as well as voices, particularly in devotional strains. I know no more agreeable and interesting spectacle than that of brothers and sisters playing and singing together those elevated compositions in music and poetry which gratify the taste and purify the heart, while their fond parents sit delighted by. I have seen and heard an elder sister thus leading the family choir, who was the soul of harmony to the whole household, and whose life was a perfect example of those virtues which I am here endeavouring to inculcate. Let no one say, in reading this chapter, that too much is here required of sisters, that no one can be expected to lead such a self-sacrificing life; for the sainted one to whom I refer was all I would ask any sister to be, and a happier person never lived. To do good

and to make others happy was her rule of life, and in this she found the art of making herself so.

“Sisters should always be willing to walk, ride, visit with their brothers, and esteem it a privilege to be their companions. It is worth while to learn innocent games for the sake of furnishing brothers with amusements, and making home the most agreeable place to them. . . .

“I have been told by some who have passed unharmed through the temptations of youth, that they owed their escape from many dangers to the intimate companionship of affectionate and pure-minded sisters. They have been saved from a hazardous meeting with idle company by some home engagement, of which their sisters were the charm; they have refrained from mixing with the impure, because they would not bring home thoughts and feelings which they could not share with those trusting, loving friends; they have put aside the wine-cup, and abstained from stronger potations, because they would not profane with their fumes the holy kiss, with which they were accustomed to bid their sisters good-night.”



### TWO YEARS OLD.

PLAYING on the carpet near me  
 Is a little cherub girl;  
 And her presence, much I fear me,  
 Sets my senses in a whirl;  
 For a book is open lying,  
 Full of grave philosophizing,  
 And I own I'm vainly trying



Here my thoughts to hold ;  
 But, in spite of my essaying,  
 They will ever more be straying  
 To that cherub near me playing,  
 Only two years old !

With her hair so long and flaxen,  
 And her sunny eyes of blue,  
 And her cheek so plump and waxen,  
 She is charming to the view.  
 Then her voice, to all who hear it,  
 Breathes a sweet, entrancing spirit—  
 O! to be for ever near it  
 Is a joy untold ;  
 For 'tis ever sweetly telling  
 To my heart, with rapture swelling,  
 Of affection inly dwelling—  
 Only two years old !

With a new delight I'm hearing  
 All her sweet attempts at words,  
 In their melody endearing  
 Sweeter far than any bird's ;  
 And the musical mistaking  
 Which her baby lips are making,  
 For my heart a charm is waking,  
 Firmer in its hold  
 Than the charm so rich and glowing,  
 From the Roman's lips o'erflowing ;  
 Then she gives a look so knowing—  
 Only two years old !

Now her ripe and honeyed kisses  
 (Honeyed, ripe for me alone)  
 Thrill my soul with varied blisses  
 Venus never yet has known

When her twining arms are round me  
 All domestic joy has crowned me,  
 And a fervent spell has bound me,  
     Never to grow cold.  
 O! there is not, this side of Adenn,  
 Aught with loveliness so laden  
 As my little cherub maiden,  
     Only two years old!



### A THIMBLE-FULL OF ROMANCE.

THE tailor's wife had stitched since five in the morning. It was now noon—the day after Christmas-day, and there really was something for dinner. The tailor was from home—the children were out, but it was close upon twelve o'clock, and in a trice they would be back, eager and hungry for their meal. Mrs. Atkins put down her work—a very handsome waistcoat of sky-blue satin, sprinkled with stars, and bordered it might be with the zodiac (the border was so strangely beautiful),—clapped her thimble on the mantel-piece, and hurried to the cupboard. At all events, there was a dinner to-day; and something seemed to promise to the tailor's wife a brighter time, and a fuller table for the time to come.

Atkins had gone to make inquiry about a ship that was to sail for the other side of the world; and though he had not at that time a single piece of Queen Victoria's minted gold, to purchase a passage for himself and family, he nevertheless would learn all the particulars of cost and necessary preparation. It was a whim, he

Now; for all that, it was a whim that controlled him beyond his powers of self-argument, had he tried to exercise them.

And all alone, Mrs. Atkins spread the table. There was a piece of beef left, and a small piece of plum-pudding; and still the pudding remained small, although Mrs. Atkins turned the plate that contained it round and round half a dozen times, and took half a dozen side-long looks at it, as though endeavouring to behold it in the most improved light. But pudding is not to be thus magnified.

The table laid, Mrs. Atkins thought she would execute a few more stitches, filling up the time until Atkins and the children came. As Mrs. Atkins approached the mantel-piece, extending her fingers towards the thimble, the thimble—of its own motion—fell over upon its side, with one distinct, prolonged sound, as from a silver bell; Mrs. Atkins's thimble, by the way, being of no such precious metal, but of working-day brass. Mrs. Atkins drew back her fingers from the thimble as from a nettle, when the thimble—self-moved—rolled off the mantel-piece, and fell upon the hearth. And then, to the astonishment and terror of Mrs. Atkins, who, strange to say, could not at that moment scream, though in no former accident had she failed, when otherwise determined—then, from the thimble began to pour forth, in small, quick puffs, smoke of silvery clearness. Mrs. Atkins dropped in her chair, and sat with her eyes upon the thimble, still puffing a shining vapour—puffing, and puffing, until, in a few minutes, the room was filled as with a cloud, and every object enveloped in it, save the small

brass thimble that glittered like a speck upon the hearth. In the midst of her terror, Mrs. Atkins thought of her little bit of beef and fragmentary pudding—but they were lost to her sight, muffled up in one white cloud that possessed the apartment.

After some minutes the cloud cleared away, slowly rolling itself up in the chimney, and Mrs. Atkins' brass thimble lay, like any other two-penny implement, upon the hearth. The same well-worn thimble—the same familiar common-place that for many a day had armed her sempstress finger.

“How do you do, Mrs. Atkins?” said a voice from the mantel-piece.

Mrs. Atkins jumped round with the shortest of jumps. She looked, and saw a gentleman——

Well, he was the strangest of gentlemen, and he was in the strangest position! But we will tell every tittle we know about him.

Measured by tailors' measure, the gentleman's stature might have been about six inches. A gentleman with a very clean and lofty look; his hair an iron gray; with a few wisdom scratches made with an iron pen—the sort of pen made out of Time's old scythes—about the corner of his eyes, that had a ceiling-ward look; a look, moreover, of self-satisfaction. He was very soberly dressed in black—very soberly; and then his white neckerchief was white and pure as snowwreath.

Mrs. Atkins thought she recognised in the miniature man a well-known face; one of those countenances that, like a royal face upon a shilling, is the property of everybody who can possess it. She had seen a picture

of The Poor Man's Friend, and—no, it could not be he; it was impossible—nevertheless, the face of the mannikin was wondrously like that flesh-and-blood goodness.

And the little gentleman, though somewhat uneasily, sat among a sprig of Christmas holly that was upon the mantel-piece; sat, and with his best pains, looked secure amid his bower of spikes.

“Hadn't you better take a chair, sir, or this stool?” said Mrs. Atkins, as she passed her apron over a three-legged piece of deal,—“you'll be more comfortable, sir.”

“Thank you,” said the little man; his face puckered as he spoke, and shifting uneasily,—“thank you; but people condemned to live in thimbles are not allowed to be comfortable.”

“Poor creatures!” cried Mrs. Atkins; “it must be a strait lodging, goodness knows. I never heard of such a thing.”

“Benighted, darkened being!” cried the little man in black; “miserable, forlorn person!” he continued, as though from a platform; “did you never hear of Solomon's brazen kettles?”

“Never, sir,” said the tailor's wife, with great humility.

“Know, then, that Solomon has at this moment a thousand brazen kettles at the bottom of the sea; and in every kettle is a prisoner, confined for no good he has done, depend upon it, to hear the sea moan and roar, and answer it with his groans. And as in brazen kettles, so”—and the little man sighed heavily—“so in brass thimbles.”

“I don't understand a word of it,” said Mrs. Atkins; and with a resolute hand she took up her thimble, and

turned it over and over, and almost unconsciously brought the thimble to her nose. But it did *not* smell of sulphur—the thimble was the like thimble it was before.

“For ten years have I lived in that thimble. Ten years,” cried the little man—and Mrs. Atkins stared now at her visiter, and now took another look at the thimble; and then she courageously thrust her thimble-finger into the familiar brass, and nodded at the little man among the holly, as much as to say,

“Now you are well got rid of, I’ll take care you sha’n’t get in again.”

The little man seemed to understand the threat of the look, for he said, with a languid smile,

“It’s no matter now; my ten years are up—my time’s out to-day. All I have now to do is to confess my past sins and the sufferings they purchased me, and then I pass to peace. I’ve paid the penalty of my selfishness, and my unquiet ghost will cease to haunt your brazen thimble.”

“A ghost!” cried Mrs. Atkins. “Well, I never thought I could be so bold to a ghost. But then, to be sure, you’re such a very little one. What was your name?”

“Never mind,” said the small man. “I was called The Poor Man’s Friend. And I can tell you, Mrs. Atkins, that I have paid pretty sharply for the vanity and vexation of the title.”

“That is, I suppose,” answered the spirited little woman, “you wasn’t his friend at all? Only the name, like?”

"Listen to my story," said the little gentleman, again shifting himself among the holly leaves. "I was, when I was alive and enjoying my proper stature, I was a man of exceeding wealth. Rich indeed was I, and as everybody thought—and at last I got myself to think so too—very good, very benevolent, very pious. Indeed, I had the habit of talking so much about the duties of the rich to the poor that, for the life of me, I never could find sufficient time to perform them. Nevertheless, I could not forbear to talk—it was so pleasant, so easy, too; and with no other effort, it made me a name that smelt among my particular friends like a nice ointment."

"The more shame for you," said Mrs. Atkins. "To get a good name, and live upon it and do nothing for it; why it's worse than coining—yes, passing bad money is nothing to it."

"Very true, Mrs. Atkins," answered the unruffled mannikin. "Very true. Yet there's a deal of brassy character passed for good. And it may sound right enough upon the world's counter, but it won't do, Mrs. Atkins, when the angels come to ring it. It won't do, ma'am."

"I should say not," replied the tailor's wife, with womanly decision.

"And so I found. It is now, madam, ten years ago since I died. If you doubt me, take your way to the cemetery. There, madam, you will see my monument. There is no mistaking it—'tis such a handsome thing, with work enough in it to have kept the sculptor and his family for a twelvemonth. I am there, ma'am, in *alto rilievo* in four compartments; and in all four my



likeness by lamenting friends is considered very perfect. In one place I am giving away quartern loaves; in another I have taken off my own coat, and am serenely offering the garment to a beggar; and the third—”

“I recollect. Good as a picture to look at it—I saw it with Tom and the children one Sunday. *Then* we could get a walk on a Sunday; and now it’s no walk, but for ever stitch. La, bless me! and that’s you in that monument! Well, I never!” ejaculated Mrs. Atkins. “And now I recollect what a lot of fine stuff there’s writ about you.”

“Don’t name it, ma’am,” said the little man, hastily; “even as I am, my cheek tingles to think of it. And when I reflect—”

“Never mind reflections!” cried the tailor’s wife, with decreasing deference towards her visiter, “but come to the story at once. How did you get in my thimble?”

“That was my sentence—that was my dreadful punishment!” cried the little man.

“Punishment!” echoed Mrs. Atkins. “Well, to be sure, little as you are, it must have cramped you terribly. And what’s so very droll, I never felt you!”

“But I felt you—every stitch,” said the mannikin, and he seemed to wince at the recollection. “However, to finish my story. You must know that, although I talked to the last day of my life about the duties of the rich, and the rights of the poor—although now and then, for the look of the thing, my name sparkled in a guinea subscription for a Home for the Houseless, or some such public benevolence, I would buy—buy where I might—I would buy cheap. Every shilling saved I considered



as a new victory over the extravagance of trade. It was not for me to inquire about wages—it was no part of my economy to be assured that the journeyman could get his shoulder of mutton and potatoes—”

“Shoulder of mutton and potatoes!” exclaimed Mrs. Atkins, as though she spoke of culinary marvels of Mahomet’s Paradise. “Well, to be sure, we had a bit of beef yesterday, but before then—”

“I cared not if you, and such as you, lived upon bran and water, if cheapness were in the stitches of my coat—if my heart, my philanthropic heart, beat beneath a waistcoat that, for economy of cost, defied competition.”

“More shame for you,” said the tailor’s wife. “Talking of waistcoats, what do you think I get for that blue thing, there?”

“Starvation!” answered the mannikin; “for I see, fine as it is—oh, I know the sort of thing, *now*—I see it is one of the glories of prime cost that defy competition. A pretty breastplate of defiance,” said the little man, “and well is such defiance punished.”

“How, punished?” asked Mrs. Atkins.

“That’s it—that’s the marrow of my story. That is the why and the wherefore that I am here. At this moment—now, woman, attend to me, for what I have to say is worth the hearing—at this moment—there are the ghosts of not less than ten thousand men and women—excellent persons when alive; the very pink of goodness, with delicate white satin feelings, as one may say—ten thousand spirits condemned for a certain time to be imprisoned in thimbles.”

“In thimbles!” exclaimed the tailor’s wife.

“In thimbles!” repeated the miniature of the departed poor man’s friend. “And their prison is far worse than the brazen dungeon in which Solomon shuts up his genii; for they, at least, are not mocked with an open cell—with a promise of liberty never, until the appointed time be come, to be obtained. Now the victims of the thimble may not budge. They have employed the cheapest thimble when alive, and the cheapest thimble is for a time their punishment when dead. My time is up, and my wounds are healing—but how, for these ten long years—”

“That’s just about the time—not quite—Tom and I have worked for—”

“For my tailor that was,” said the mannikin. “How for the time have you tortured me!”

“I—I couldn’t do it,” cried Mrs. Atkins, sharply.

“You couldn’t help it—’twas your duty and my fate. Thus, for every stitch you took, I felt your needle-head go clean into what seemed my flesh. And my sense of feeling was sharpened into spiritual suffering. For fourteen hours a day have I felt—incessantly felt—the punctures of the tormenting steel. Hundreds of thousands of little daggers piercing me through and through, and with every stitch a jerk that seemed to snatch at every nerve.”

“Mercy on us!” cried the tailor’s wife.

“Ay, mercy on us!” said the little man. “But we ask mercy in vain who have had no mercy on others. Live and let starve, was my inner creed; it’s a wicked religion, Mrs. Atkins, and carries its after-punishment. And depend upon it, they who without care for the con-

forts, the necessities of the workers, *will* have only the cheapest work, big as their names may sound, and large as their presence in the world may be—their souls dwell in a thimble.”

And here the little man vanished, and the Dutch clock struck twelve, and Atkins, with a brightened face, with a child in either hand, and two following, came home to dinner. Now, whether Mrs. Atkins did or did not tell to her husband her interview with the mannikin, is not here or elsewhere the business of RED RIDING HOOD.



## MY MOTHER.

It was a very cold day in December. My mother was sewing, and my brothers and myself were very pleasantly engaged in our comfortable sitting-room, when my mother desired me to go to her room and bring her a part of her work. I very petulantly exclaimed,

“Can’t Charles go? I’m so cold!”

“No,” said my mother, meekly, “I wish you to go.”

This irritated me very much, and I said,

“I always have to do everything,” jerking open the door, and slamming it violently after me.

My mother called me back, and I stood in the door, allowing a current of cold air to blow upon her, while she lifted her blue eyes to mine, and, with a look of sadness I shall never forget, said,

“Soon my little daughter will have no mother, then she will feel sorry for this behaviour.”

I started up stairs, muttering,

“No, you won’t die; you only say that to act on my feelings.”

I returned, handed the parcel to my mother, and remained cross and sullen for some time; yet I loved my mother very much, but could not bear to yield my will to hers.

Several weeks passed away—I forgot the occurrence, nor had my mother alluded to it—when she was taken suddenly and dangerously ill; and very soon all hope of her recovery was gone. Then my sin rushed upon my mind, causing the deepest regret. The nature of my mother’s disease caused delirium nearly all the time, and I had no opportunity to ask forgiveness. I would sit beside her bed, while tears coursed rapidly down my cheeks, and her eyes would be fixed upon me. But, ah! no glance of recognition; no beaming forth of a mother’s love was there! Vacant, vacant, still vacant was that gaze, and I would rush from the room, and wish I could die!

Once, during a short interval of consciousness, she looked round the room, and asked for me. I was with my brothers, for I felt as if I must constantly watch over them, and, when sent for, hastened to her bedside. But, alas! too late! That same fixed, vacant stare had returned, nor did she ever again recognise me. At the expiration of eleven days from the commencement of her illness, death loosed the “silver cord,” and “the weary wheel of life stood still.” I was present at the

beginning of the last struggle, which was long and very severe, but the sight of his *almost* motherless girl was more than my already agonized father could bear, and he sent me away. I sought my little brothers in the sitting-room, and, as they hung around me with anxious inquiries about our dying mother, I was indeed "sorry for my behaviour." The agony I endured was too great for tears or utterance, and I thought, when all was over, and my father led me to look upon her form, as it lay calmly and peacefully in the embrace of death, with a heavenly smile upon those lips that had never spoken aught but words of love and kindness, that my heart would break, and I wished it might.

When I pressed my lips upon that marble brow, it seemed as if its icy coldness would congeal my very heart's blood; and I thought, "Oh! if my blessed mother could be restored to me for even a single month, that I might anticipate every wish, and by prompt obedience and love show her how inexpressibly dear she was to me, and how sorry I was for past follies!"

But all my wishes were fruitless, and it was now too late to repair the injury I had done. I was the only daughter and eldest child, the constant companion of my mother, who, during the eleven years that I had lived, had kindly watched over me, and instructed me; nor could I call to mind a single instance of unkindness or impatience. When I did wrong, she would fix her expressive blue eyes upon me without a word, while the tears would glisten in them, and I could not resist their sad reproof. The instance I have named is the only one

that I remember, in which I conducted myself so badly towards my mother.

Twenty years have passed since then, and I am myself a mother, but that meek, sad look, and tone of wounded love still haunt me, and of all things I regret having done in childhood, *that* carries with it the deepest sting. I have often seen girls, and boys, too, act towards a kind and gentle mother as I then did; and if such children should happen to read this true, sad story, I beg them to change their course; become kind and obedient to their parents, and then they will be spared the deep sorrow which I still feel when I think of my unkindness to my departed mother.



#### MUSIC IN FAMILIES.

THE old notion, that music could be learned only by those who had a peculiar gift or ear for it, seems to be pretty nearly exploded. It seems to be everywhere conceded, by those who have paid much attention to the subject, that music may be as generally and as successfully taught to young persons as other branches of knowledge. There will, of course, be different degrees of talent and aptness to learn manifested in this as in everything else, and the amount of attainment will vary correspondingly. But does it follow that an art should not be taught at all, because the highest excellence cannot be attained in it? Not one child in a thousand can



excel in penmanship, in drawing, or in mathematics. But who would consider that a sufficient reason for not attempting instructions in those branches? Since the introduction of music into common schools in this country, and in Germany and Prussia, it has been sufficiently demonstrated, that it may be taught with as much success as reading and writing.

Aside from its importance as a part of public worship, and as a personal accomplishment, it exerts a marked and very beneficial influence in promoting social enjoyment and kind feeling in the family. In this view it presents itself to parents in a very attractive light.

Music serves to make a home pleasant, by engaging many of its inmates in a delightful recreation, and thus dispelling the sourness and gloom which frequently arise from petty disputes, from mortified vanity, from discontent and envy. It prevents, for the time, at least, evil thoughts and evil speaking, and tends to relieve the minds of both performers and hearers from the depressing effects of care and melancholy. Young persons need, and will have amusements. If an innocent and improving kind be not provided at home, they will seek for *some* kind elsewhere. If they find places more agreeable to them than their homes, those homes will be deserted, and thus the gentle and holy influences which ought to encircle the family fireside, will be in a great measure lost.

The discipline of the heart, afforded by music, is not unimportant. It is a language—an expression of sublime thoughts and pure affections. It is a heavenly employment—the delight of angels in another and a

letter world. It begets and perpetuates love ; and love is from God. Everything which promotes affectionate intercourse between parents and children, and brothers and sisters, is of great value in giving purity and strength to home influences. In these latter days, when improper places of public amusement are so numerous and cheap ; when vice is arrayed in all the charms of painting and sculpture, of poetry, eloquence, and music, concerted and vigorous efforts should be made to preserve the young from their pernicious influence. To do this, they must be kept at home ; and to keep them at home, they must be made to love their homes. To secure that love, home must be made agreeable ; and, for this, music is unquestionably one of the cheapest and most efficient means.

No families are so pleasant as those where the voices of parents and children mingle in sweet, solemn, and exhilarating sounds. No scenes present themselves to the memory, in after life, with more delightful associations than those in which favourite tunes and fragments of well-remembered verse are connected with the familiar faces and fond endearments of the domestic hearth.

Again, music is not without use as an intellectual and also as a physical exercise. The study of it as a science is, perhaps, as good discipline as the study of other sciences, for it exercises the same faculties of the mind ; while the practice of it as an art gives flexibility, clearness, and strength to the voice, develops the chest, and invigorates the whole frame.

A strong prejudice against music has arisen in the minds of many persons, from the *excess* to which it is



sometimes carried. If children are taught to sing, it is alleged, they will be so fond of it as to cause it to interfere with more serious and weighty matters. In some instances it may be so. But it should be remembered that the objection implies the *abuse* of a thing good in itself, and applies with equal force to social visiting, to reading, and every kind of recreation. Fruit is good; but to be indulged in with impunity it must be eaten in moderate quantities and at proper times.

So with music: if practised to such an extent as to cause a waste of time needed for other purposes, or in such a manner as to be a pander to vice, it becomes a source of corruption. But under the control of an enlightened understanding and conscience, it is the handmaid of virtue. Like woman, another of Heaven's kind gifts to man, it "doubles our joys and divides our sorrows;" and, like her, too, it finds its most appropriate place, and its sweetest influences, in the bosom of the family.



#### DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILDREN READ?

NOT many days since we saw a couple of young ladies returning from the city library with two or three volumes apiece, which they had selected to read, or to be read. In looking over the titles, we inquired of one of the ladies, "Does your father allow you to read such books as these?" Mark the reply. She said, "He does not know it" We should like to know how many fathers

and mothers do know what their children are reading. The facilities for obtaining books, periodicals, and papers never were greater than at the present time. Not only good books, but books, publications, and prints, of the very worst kind, are sown, as it were, broadcast over the land.

Publications of the vilest kind are eagerly sought by the young, and at an age when they are most easily ruined. By the reading and perusal of such books and prints, the mind is filled with an imagery that is pondered over until the heart is corrupted, and sleep, even nature's restorer, is disturbed by the mind's vile imaginings. Impurity of thought precedes impurity of action; and where you find the latter it may not unfrequently be traced to the reading of that species of publications to which we have referred.

It cannot be regarded by any thoughtful parent a matter of indifference as to what his children are reading. No parent should permit his children to select reading matter from any public library. The work of selecting books to be read by children should always be done by parents, or by some one whom they can trust.

There are books and prints in circulation among the young that would put the most depraved to the blush, that is to say, if corruption itself can be tinged by shame. We took a book of this kind from a pupil in school, and consigned it immediately to the fire. The boy was very indignant at the time, but we rejoice to say that we have lived long enough to receive his most hearty thanks for it. It was, as we knew, and he can see it now, an act of kindness to him. The book was

calculated to awaken impure desires, and to feed and nourish them until they should manifest themselves in acts which lead to the utter ruin and destruction of both body and soul.

How many a child, after growing to manhood, has sought an opportunity to thank his parents and teachers for like restraints which at the time seemed cruel and unkind! The child will seek eagerly that which his passions and appetite urge him to, without any reference to the future. Being without knowledge and experience sufficient to guide him, he must be directed by his parents and teachers. If they fail through indulgence to guide him aright, such parents and teachers will receive, as is their most just due, the curses of such children in manhood as have been thus ruined.

If a child, who has a desire to read, has acquired a taste for light reading, and has free access to a public library well stored with such books, he will read little else than what he ought not to read, and the more he reads the less intellectual power he seems to have, until, as is not unfrequently the case, he becomes a fit inmate for the insane asylum.

What we would impress upon parents is, that they should know what their children are reading, and that there should be no occasion for them to say, our parents do not know what we are reading, although the children know and confess that they are reading what their parents would not approve if they knew the character of the books. Parents cannot be too vigilant in the discharge of this duty to their children—nor can children be too thankful for having parents who take the *whole*

oversight of matters which have so important a bearing upon the formation of the character for all the future.



### THE PROGRESS OF GREEDINESS.

THAT much of our happiness and well-being in after life depends upon education, will be readily admitted by all—and yet how few of those who have the care of children manage them properly! Most people lay down general rules, which they apply to all young people indiscriminately; never reflecting that tempers vary, and that the management which succeeds with one child may have a very different effect upon another, of a dissimilar, though, perhaps, not a worse disposition, which, by a more judicious mode of arrangement, might have been led into amiable habits. Sometimes, indeed, vices are actually induced by the faulty mode of treatment of the best-intentioned people.

I do not think I was actually greedy; nay, I am sure I was not so; anxiety for my health, which was nevertheless good, although I never was a robust child, led my parents to be particularly careful of my diet. “Children should live plainly, and not be permitted to over-eat themselves,” they said; a wise maxim, certainly, but which, notwithstanding, should be followed with caution. I was never to be permitted to taste tea, butter, pastry, cheese, beer, cakes, salad, or a hundred other every day things, which, although unwholesome in

any quantity, are not likely to do much harm to any child that takes a sufficiency of exercise, if eaten in moderation. For some of the above-named delicacies, as I then believed them, I had no inclination—further than that which leads frail human nature to long for what is rare and difficult to obtain—as was plainly proved by my never touching many of these said dainties, when there was no longer any restriction.

Perhaps I was inclined to think on forbidden fruit more than I should otherwise have done, by seeing my companions—great, strong, healthy, noisy children—eating as much as they pleased of whatever came before them; and hearing them express pity for me, as a poor little half-starved thing, that dared not live like other people, and would in consequence most likely never grow. My chief playfellow, a blowsy, gross-feeding, romping cousin of my own, without the slightest intention, used to mortify me continually. She ran about without bonnet or gloves, late and early; I was always dressed in hat, spencer, walking-shoes, and all the et ceteras; cautioned against going on damp grass, eating wild fruit, or walking where the least wind could touch me; while Maria, all this time, bounding about unchecked, was never ill, and never quiet. She was not much more than one year older than me, but a full head taller, and much stouter; her legs, upon which she seemed greatly to pride herself, almost as thick as my body, and her arms almost as red as her cheeks. By all the children who visited us she was preferred to me, for she was extremely good-natured; and being able to go anywhere, used often to leave me on the gravel-walks,

from whence I durst not stir, while she led the youthful band to gambol about the grass, cross the brooks, laughing and screaming with delight; poor little me standing solitary and mortified, having for my only consolation the nursery-maid's remark:—"Never mind, Miss Augusta, you are a good girl, doing as papa and mamma bid you, and not following the example of these naughty, noisy children, who are tearing and dirtying their clothes, and who deserve a good whipping;" or occasionally overhearing a visiter—after, however, say to me, "Maria would make two of you, why don't you jump about like her?"—observe to another, "Augusta is much more like a gentleman's daughter; Maria is really a rough, vulgar little thing, although a fine child." I was inclined to look up to one who often, in the kindness of her heart, used to lift me over puddles, that I might extend my walk without danger of wetting my feet, and pull flowers, which I was never so expert as herself in climbing walls or rocks to attain, lest I should fall down and hurt myself, or, what I dreaded even more, tear my frock; and as she had a great many brothers and sisters older than herself, she used to carry off their ideas and conversation, and repeat them to me, till I thought her a female Solomon. I had no one to speak to me but those who always adapted their conversation to my age, or younger than my age; so it was not very extraordinary that I leant to the positively expressed opinion of my young cousin, who gathered from her family that health, height, thick legs, and muscular strength were the most noble attributes of human nature — to understand all country matters, and sew neatly,



the most desirable accomplishments. Alas! for me, I had nothing except the first of the requisites to boast of; I was neither tall, strong, nor had I thick legs, large feet, red cheeks, or brown hands; I hated sewing, and was not sufficiently among servants and work-people to gain the sort of knowledge which I was told was most to be prized. I did not care for being lady-like, which I fancied was synonymous with mental and bodily weakness; and I became quiet, timid, and irresolute in company, though I tried to be as noisy and vulgar as I could, when alone, by way of practice; but I never could somehow be, as they expressed it, like "*one of them*," which I regretted at the time as sincerely as I have rejoiced at it since.

But, to return to the more immediate subject of this paper. Of the injudicious mode in which my eating and drinking concerns were managed by my affectionate, but not quite wisely-judging parents, I may enumerate some needless mortifications. One day, I accompanied my mother and aunt in a round of country visits: the first place we went to was Titchfield Park, where, as there were young people, I was almost immediately carried from the drawing-room into the school-room, to be played with and caressed. They showed me their toys and picture-books, gave me a ride on a rocking-horse, and, on parting, a large slice of plum-cake wrapped in paper. I was called off to join the party just as they were stepping into the carriage, where I sat at their feet, waiting for a pause in the conversation; when, proud of having something of my own, something to give, something to bestow on elder people, I held up my



piece of cake, and begged them to help themselves, exulting in the gratitude (which I thought, comparing their feelings in my mind with what I knew would be my own in the same case) I would raise in their breasts by so precious a gift; my aunt good-humouredly smiled and said, "No, thank you, love," went on talking; but mamma, as soon as she caught sight of my treasure, cried, "Why, Augusta, who gave you such a thing? How very imprudent in Miss Titchfield to give such a child a large piece of rich cake! My dear, you will make yourself sick; give it me, and I shall take care of it; you shall have a bit every day, but if you were to eat it all at once you would be ill, and I should be forced to give you senna." I relinquished my cake with a heavy heart, and, although I received every crumb most regularly in the course of five or six days, my pleasure in the possession of the cake was gone, and I inwardly resolved not to offer to anybody the next good thing I got hold of. Sometime afterwards, I forgot my intended prudence, and, being deprived in a like manner of some nuts, which General Tarrance had given me, I made a resolution to the same effect, which I kept better. Every bit of cake or fruit I could clutch, I ate secretly and quickly, lest some one should find it out and take it from me. I was afraid to offer anything to my playfellows, lest they, not thinking of the consequences, should imprudently betray me. Servants generally like to indulge children, and many a greasy potato from under the meat, many a piece of baked paste was given me by the cook; and I still look back with gastronomic delight to the fresh-churned butter,

spread upon a piece of oat-cake by the thumb of Tibby, the dairy-maid. I have never tasted butter so good since. I was always looking for something to eat. I ever roamed about seeking what I might devour, from new cheese down to horse-beans. These stolen indulgences did my body no harm, but the effect they had upon my mind long remained; and even when I grew up, and was introduced into company, I was warned to avoid this, to take little of that, to be careful of indulging in the other. Could any one suspect the unnecessary feelings of mortification entailed upon a child, in being (even when kindly used) treated differently from other children, they would pause before they inflicted so cruel a wound on their young feelings.

I was taken to —, to see a grand procession. At the house where we went to there were several young people, of my own age, assembled to enjoy the sight; and left together we soon became acquainted. When we had strained our little delighted eyes till the last ragged urchin of the rabble that followed had disappeared, we turned round, and, to our pleasure and surprise, discovered the table covered with plates, upon each of which was a gooseberry tart. Few of the elder part of the company were in the room, and we all advanced, chattering and happy, to the table, I among the rest, when the lady who was in the act of presenting a tart to me was stopped by another, saying, "We must not venture to offer Miss Courtney any until her papa and mamma give her leave; here is some bread and butter to eat till they come;" but I, annoyed by this precaution, and the publicity of it, answered crossly, "I mayn't eat butter,

neither." "Well, then, here is some jelly, my dear." I took it sullenly, kept it some time without even tasting it, but at last hunger prevailed. The rest of the children had demolished their tarts, mine remained *en attendant* my parent's return, and I began to nibble my bread and jelly. At last my parents entered, were applied to, gave their consent to my having the gooseberries, but not the crust. Everybody said I was a good girl for not crying, and for refusing the forbidden butter; but neither praises nor fruit gave me any pleasure; I felt myself an unhappy MARKED child.

That this love of eating was created by circumstances any one, with much power of discriminating character, might have perceived; for when I had a story-book which interested me, I was always very unwilling to leave it for a dinner, where were served even my favourite dishes; still there was always so much talk about eating; every finger-ache was accounted for by having eaten something that was too rich, or too strong; whenever anything was well dressed, it was so praised—when the reverse, so lamented; the tasting this, or that, made such a favour, and such little tiny bits given after all, that I learned to consider eating as the chief good. I cannot say, although I liked good things, that I was particularly dainty. I had a vigorous appetite, and a dislike to be different from others, and could not be made to believe that things were unwholesome which were pointed out as such; as I knew well I had often ate butter, cheese, fruit, unknown to any one, and in large quantities, without doing my health the slightest hurt; so, in more ways than one, these silly restrictions did harm.

At last, in consequence of an addition being about to be built to the house, the family dispersed for a time, and I was sent to school for six months, to be out of the way. At first the mortification I endured in being treated differently from the rest, was very painful to my feelings. I actually longed for water to my milk, as well as butter to my bread, because I alone, of the sixty assembled at Beech House, was without it; but as, after the first quarter, nothing more upon the subject was said, I was permitted to fare like the rest. and the quantity of stale bread, thinly spread with *salt* butter, I devoured was incredible, and greatly excited the wonder of my companions, who frequently grumbled, because they did not live so well at school as at home, though few of their papas kept their carriage, as mine did. I eat myself stupid every Saturday, upon a doughy meat-pie, made up of all the scraps of the week, and became so *fat* that when I went home at the holidays, every one was astonished. Any one would naturally imagine that the manifest improvement in my appearance would have opened the eyes of my family; but, no! the same system recommenced, and I soon lost my flesh again.

When I married my present husband, whom I really loved, one of my matrimonial castles in the air (well may ye start, ye romantic young ladies!) was, that being mistress of store-rooms and closets, I should be able to eat all the nice things I fancied, as often as I pleased, without restraint.

Strange as it may seem, no sooner did I feel secure that at any time I might have what I liked, than all

desire for having it died away, and, after a few years, I became quite abstemious.

Profiting by the mistakes of my parents, I have been careful to pursue a totally different plan with my children, and to let them have every kind of food, in sufficient quantities, and without remark: healthier, happier children I never saw, and none of them are the least greedy.

I endeavour also to make them as comfortable and independent as our fortune will permit; I allow them to have things and places of their *own*, and as religiously respect their property as I expect them to do mine. They have their own quiet little sitting-room, and when we are together, at meals, or in the evening, I promote mirth and innocent amusement to the utmost of my power. I think it would require a very strong attachment indeed, for any man to be able to persuade them to exchange their father's house for his. Alas! how many unhappy marriages have been made, for no worse reasons than a desire to possess a home where they could feel independent and *comfortable*. "I wonder what can make Dora Maitland marry Mr. Beccher, good, and good-looking though he be," said a young lady of my acquaintance, who was evidently very anxious to be married herself; "she and her sisters have such a nice, happy home, a sitting-room, a pony, a garden, liberal pocket-money, and all they want; were I as comfortable, I know I should not wish to be married for a long time to come; but as I am quite different at mamma's, and of course cannot indulge them, I am so very *uncomfortable*, that I shall take the very first respectable man

that asks me." She accordingly married a very cross old general, much her senior, and was extremely unhappy for six years, when he died, leaving her an easy but not large income. She has had many advantageous proposals since, but resolutely rejects them all. "Why should I marry," she says, "when I am quite comfortable?" One of her sisters ran off with a lieutenant in a marching regiment, another married the curate; both have large families, small fortunes, and cross husbands; and both say they never would have married had they been happy at home; their parents were good, kind people, but made no distinction between a daughter of eight years of age and one of eighteen. Fathers and mothers, reflect upon these *truths*, and reform ere it is too late!

Dora Maitland, whose marriage to an amiable young man excited the wonder of the *ci-devant* Miss Stevens, was the only one of six sisters who married young. Two of the others, who were engaged, waited till the death of their parents; and the three who remain yet unmarried are as united, independent, and happy in their sweet little cottage, as they were in their father's more magnificent mansion. One manages all out-of-doors concerns; another the house and servants; and the youngest, who has a weak ankle, receives the company, writes the letters, and takes care of the library: one does not interfere with the department of the other, and all goes on smoothly.

If this slight sketch will induce those better fitted for the task, to enlarge upon mistakes in education by well-meaning parents, I shall rejoice in having written this paper.



## THE CRADLE AWAY UP IN THE GARRET.

IT was an old-fashioned little cradle. The proud daughter-in-law would scorn to have it in the nursery. Her children sleep in dainty cribs; and the relic of olden times is pushed into a darkened corner, away up in the garret. It is a quiet autumnal day; such days are full of memories; and the old grandmother is thinking, thinking. She arises at length, and totters up, and up, the lofty flights of stairs; she passes through the elegant rooms; she gains the garret, and sinks down beside that unsightly cradle, and bows her trembling head over it, as if watching the slumbers of a babe. That little garret, with one long beam of sunlight streaming from the high window; and the spider-webs woven over the rafters, and one cricket, singing lonesomely from some silent corner, is a good place to dream. Memory is unfolding picture after picture, for the grandmother to look upon.

She sees a cabin home. It is in the flush of summertime; there are green boughs in the fireplace, and around the clock, and over the mantel-board. There are short, white, muslin curtains, drawn partially across the windows. There are two beds, with a bureau between, standing in the eastern part of the room; and a little stand, with a Bible and hymn-book upon its white fringed cover, beneath the little looking-glass. There is her cupboard, with its brightly-polished pewter, and the pine table, scoured by her own hands. And she is



sitting by the window, her foot gently touching that same dear little cradle; and her eyes, lifted from her sewing, now and then, to see if her heart's pride is coming. How deliciously her heart is stirred to the music of sweet thoughts! It is her first-born, her darling Johnny, sleeping in the cradle. Never yet have his dewy, rose-bud lips murmured "mother;" but his dimpled arms clasp her neck; his velvet cheek nestles against her breast, his clear blue eyes look lovingly into her own. She is the young mother again, as memory paints that sweet baby face. She hears the bees humming in the little bed of pinks, below the window. She sees the shadow-leaves of the Virginia creepers, playing upon the grass, in the sunlight, as the breeze stirs the long clasping arms that cling about the rough logs.

She hears the rivulet's ripple, as it winds through mossy spots, and leaves the roots of the old sycamore, whose shadows fall upon her roof. She hears the birds singing, away off in the woods. She sees, oh, best of all, her husband coming home from his daily labour. His step is on the sill, his merry voice speaks her name, and then little Johnny is clasped to his heart.

Another picture. She is a little older now. It is winter; there are drifts of snow on the eaves; as far as she can look, one unbroken mass of snow. She hears the winds moan through the sycamore. The flowers are dead; the rivulet frozen; the birds silent. But there is a bright fire upon the hearth, and the cabin home warm with its crimson light. Johnny is playing with father; and a baby girl, the little Lizzie, is in the crad'le; fragile, delicate, beautiful; she has dark eyes,

like mother's, only they bear a sadder, softer look, and her baby-smile seems sad also; her hands are clasped and thrown above her head, and she smiles in her sleep, as if the angels were whispering to her.

Another picture. It is in the month of May, and all out of doors is so beautiful. Flowers in the woodland; birds in the woodland; joyous music everywhere. Everywhere? No, there is sadness in the cabin-house. There is another babe in the cradle. It is robust, and the blood of health flows in its veins. It is Charlie. Why are they sad, then? Johnny sits with his face hidden in his mother's bosom, and she is sobbing. Under the front window is something covered with white. The neighbour-women are moving noiselessly about, speaking but little. Lizzie is in her coffin. There is an empty grave where buttercups dot the grass. Dear little Lizzie! Joy that the angels took thee home so early.

Another picture. Johnny has grown up to nearly manhood. Charlie is a stout, merry boy, and there are others about the fireside. The mother is a good deal older now. Her hair is streaked a little with silver; her brow furrowed, and her cheek very faded. There are fair daughters and sons, that have been born unto her since Lizzie died. Grace, with her dazzling blue eyes and golden hair; Mary, with sad, dark eyes, like her dead sister; Annie, with her lips ever dewy with love and joy; Reginald, with eyes and brow so like his father's, and Louis, the youngest, the pet and the darling. An unbroken family, but not for long.

Another picture. She is a widow now. Her beloved

siceps with little Lizzie. God knows how bereft she is; to Him she looks for balm; to Him she prays for her dear children, and most of all for Reginald—the proud, the passionate, wilful Reginald. Ah, the mother's heart! How it goes with her children! How it would bear every pang, that they might be saved! Yet, how often it is torn, crushed, broken by those she has sheltered in her bosom! God pity the mother whose heart thus beats against thorns.

Another picture. Oh God, have pity! The household altar is almost desolate. Years have gone by—sad years. No wonder the palsied hand trembles as it clasps the cradle. No wonder tears fall where sunny heads once nestled. No wonder the old grandmother cries out, “Father, have mercy!” for she feels the need of strength and love. Johnny is still with her; he is growing wealthy. Mary is in the grave, stricken in early womanhood, when life seemed so bright. Beautiful Grace is gone, she knows not whither. Beauty, to her, was a curse, and she fled to a distant land with one fascinating as the serpent, but already wedded. Annie joined her fortunes to one, alas! unworthy, and died far from her mother's house, of a broken heart. Reginald went into the gay world—was tempted—was lost!—and the grave of the drunkard and the debauchee closes over his bright head. Louis, the pet, the youngest, is winning himself a name beneath Italian skies; the beautiful life of the poet-painter is his own, and his face is inspired, almost, by the beautiful associations around him. Over the ocean do his mother's prayers often go to him.

Another picture. Oh no, it is too real. The old garret—the to-day—the empty cradle. She is living with Johnny, in his costly home. She is considered an intruder by the daughter-in-law; and her son—her Johnny—the first-born, whom she has watched over, and cradled on her breast, and loved so, says: “Mother is getting to be quite troublesome; she is growing childish.”

The desolate old grandmother knows this, and longs for the grave. She has outlived all that makes life attractive. God compass that weary, almost worn-out heart with His love, and take her to His house of many mansions!



### THE HEAVENLY SHEPHERD.

WHEN on my ear your loss was knelled,  
 And tender sympathy upburst,  
 A little rill from memory swelled,  
 Which once had soothed my bitter thirst.

And I was fain to bear to you  
 Some portion of its mild relief,  
 That it might be as healing dew  
 To steal some fever from your grief.

AFTER our child's untroubled breath  
 In to the Father took its way,  
 And on our house the shade of death  
 Like a long twilight hunting lay;

And friends came round with us to weep  
Her little spirit's swift remove,  
This story of the Alpine sheep  
Was told to us by one we love.

They in the valley's sheltering care  
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,  
And when the sod grows brown and bare,  
The shepherd strives to make them climb

To airy shelves of pastures green  
That hang around the mountain's side,  
Whose grass and flowers together lean,  
And down through mists the sunbeams slide.

But nought can tempt the timid things  
That steep and rugged path to try,  
Though sweet the shepherd calls and sings,  
And seared below the pastures lie,

Till in his arms their lambs he takes,  
Along the dizzy verge to go ;  
Then heedless of the rifts and breaks,  
They followed on o'er rock and snow.

And in those pastures lifted fair,  
More dewy soft than lowland mead,  
The shepherd drops his tender care,  
And sheep and lambs together feed.

This parable by nature breathed,  
Blew on me as the South wind free,  
O'er frozen brooks that float unsheathed  
From icy thralldom to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night,  
 Would all my happy senses sway,  
 Of the good Shepherd on the height,  
 Or climbing o'er the stony way,

Holding *our* little lamb asleep;  
 And like the burthen of the sea,  
 Sounded that voice along the deep,  
 Saying, "Arise and follow me."



#### HE NEVER KEPT HIS WIFE WAITING.

"SHE never kept her husband waiting," is the title of a piece we saw in an exchange paper. We wish we could say the same of all husbands—they never keep their wives waiting; but there are many—too many—wives who burn the midnight oil, waiting the tardy return of their husbands. Is it not enough for a half-sick and weary mother, to watch the greater part of the night with a sick and restless infant, but she must, in too many cases, wait and watch many anxious hours for him who ought to share her sorrows, and lighten her cares? *He* is enjoying himself away among some congenial friends, while she is at home, mourning over his coldness and neglect, and perhaps weeping over a frail and drooping child. We wish none but drunken and dissolute husbands kept their wives waiting; but it is often the case the husband is thoughtless; perhaps he meets a friend, dinner waits, and the wife, who does her

own work, is wondering what can keep her husband; she fears something has happened to him. He surely would not make her wait so; and in this anxious state she waits, hour after hour, for her husband has been persuaded to dine with a friend, and he is too thoughtless to send his anxious wife word, and she spends the whole afternoon, nervous and anxious, feeling too careworn to have an appetite for her lonesome dinner. But her children must be attended to, and her domestic affairs must go on, notwithstanding her sad and dejected condition. After spending the greater part of the day in this manner, she is kept awake through the night with a restless babe, which none but a mother can soothe. Would it be a wonder if, the next morning, she should rise—if able to rise at all—with an aching head, pale and careworn countenance, instead of a fresh and smiling face, and elastic spirits? Would it be surprising if she would be rather slow in preparing breakfast, or that her husband had to wait, if that careworn mother had to do her own work, as too many mothers have to do? Need husbands, who keep their wives waiting, wonder that they fade so soon and look sickly? A real, true wife and mother is necessarily confined at home the greater part of her time, and seldom sees any company but that of her children and husband, and it is the duty of the husband, and ought to be his choice, if he loves his wife, to give her as much of his time as he can possibly take from important business, interesting himself in all that interests her. She thinks more of his company than any one else in the wide world does, and when the hour for dinner arrives, she watches with a



cheerful expectation of spending a little time in kind and familiar conversation, with one whose company she prizes more than all the world beside; and in her lonely and retired life, these dinner and tea times are eras of joy, giving a cheerful change to the sameness of her never-ending duties.

Husband, if you love your wife, do not keep her waiting; if you meet a friend on your way to dinner, do not let him keep you, for your bosom friend is waiting and watching for you. When the business of the day is over, do not talk politics, or take a stroll with a companion, for tea is ready, and a tired and half-sick wife is waiting for your company and sympathizing words. If she enjoys your society so much, ought it not to be reciprocal? *She*, who gave herself alone to you in all her youth and beauty, and who is willing to stay secluded at home to care for your comfort, and watch over little ones—ought you not to prize her company more than all besides?—more than societies, clubs, or the most intelligent and brilliant companions? There are many men, who are respectable and industrious, and think they love their wives, and are doing their duty, but allow this, that, or the other society or club, to take the time they ought to give their wives.

## MY OWN FIRESIDE.

---

It is a mystic circle that surrounds  
Comforts and virtues never known beyond  
Its hallowed Lullaby.

---

LET others seek for empty joys,  
In ball or concert, rout or play ;  
Whilst, far from Fashion's idle noise,  
Her gilded domes and trappings gay,  
I while the wintry eve away,  
'Twixt book and lute the hours divide ;  
And marvel how I e'er could stray  
From thee—my own fireside !

My own fireside ! Those simple words  
Can bid the sweetest dreams arise,  
Awaken feeling's tenderest chords,  
And fill with tears of joy mine eyes.  
What is there my wild heart can prize  
That doth not in thy sphere abide ?  
Haunt of my home-bred sympathies,  
My own—My own fireside !

A gentle form is near me now ;  
A small white hand is clasped in mine ;  
I gaze upon her placid brow,  
And ask, what joys can equal thine ?  
A babe, whose beauties half divine,  
In sleep his mother's eyes doth hide ;  
Where may Love seek a fitter shrine  
Than thou—my own fireside ?

My refuge ever from the storm  
Of this world's passion, strife, and care ;  
Though thunder-clouds the skies deform,  
Their fury cannot reach me there ;

There all is cheerful, calm and fair ;  
 Wrath, Envy, Malice, Strife or Pride  
 Hath never made its hated lair  
 By thee—my own fireside !

Shrine of my household deities !  
 Bright scenes of home's unsullied joys,  
 To thee my burdened spirit flies  
 When Fortune frowns, or Care annoys !  
 Thine is the bliss that never cloys ;  
 The smile whose truth has oft been tried ;  
 What, then, are this world's tinsel toys  
 To thee—my own fireside !

Oh, may the yearnings, fond and sweet,  
 That bid my thoughts be all of thee,  
 Thus ever guide my wandering feet  
 To thy heart-soothing sanctuary ;  
 Whate'er my future years may be,  
 Let joy or grief my fate betide,  
 Be still an Eden bright to me,  
 My own—my own fireside !



### BE PATIENT WITH THE LITTLE ONES.

Be patient with the little ones. Let neither their slow understanding nor their occasional pertness offend you, or provoke the sharp reproof. Remember the world is new to them, and they have no slight task to grasp with their unripened intellects the mass of facts and truths that crowd upon their attention. You are grown to maturity and strength through years of experience.



TEASING PAPA.



and it ill becomes you to fret at the little child that fails to keep pace with your thought. Teach him patiently, as God teaches you, "line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little." Cheer him on in this conflict of mind: in after years his ripe, rich thought shall rise up and call you blessed.

Bide patiently the endless questionings of your children. Do not roughly crush the springing spirit of free inquiry, with an impatient word or frown, nor attempt, on the contrary, a long and instructive reply to every slight and casual question. Seek rather to deepen their curiosity. Convert, if possible, the careless question into a profound and earnest inquiry; and aim rather to direct and aid, than to answer this inquiry. Let your reply send the little questioner forth, not so much proud of what he has learned, as anxious to know more. Happy thou, if in giving thy child the molecule of truth he asks for, thou canst whet his curiosity with a glimpse of the mountain of truth lying beyond; so wilt thou send forth a philosopher, and not a silly pedant into the world.

Bear patiently the childish humours of those little ones. They are but the untutored pleading of the young spirit for care and cultivation. Irritated into strength, and hardened into habits, they will haunt the whole of life like fiends of despair, and make thy little ones curse the day they were born; but, corrected kindly and patiently, they become the elements of happiness and usefulness. Passions are but fires that may either scorch us with their uncontrolled fury, or may yield us a genial and needful warmth.

Bless your little ones with a patient care of their childhood, and they will certainly consecrate the glory and grace of their manhood to your service. Sow in their hearts the seeds of a perennial blessedness; its ripened fruit will afford you a perpetual joy.



## THE INVALID WIFE.

“ALWAYS sick,” from month to month, and year to year, friends become accustomed to her pale face and long bony fingers, her slow step and short quick breath, and weary of that faint smile, and inattention to dress, and reluctance to going out; and they say impatiently, “All she needs is air, exercise, and cheerfulness; what a drone she has become! I pity her husband.”

The doctor looks at her with a meaning smile, saying, “You are too sedentary in your habits, madam—your temperament is nervous, little troubles destroy your equanimity—take the world easy, care less for household affairs, never mind how the dinner is served up, and take no thought about the children. You have no organic disease, madam, no liver affection, no consumption; it is all nervous—all mental. Good morning, madam. *I pity her husband.*”

“All nervous! this dreadful headache, this knife-like pain in my side, this loss of appetite? But it must be so, the doctor ought to know; and I will try to believe



him, and forget my cares ;” and she leans back in her chair with a new resolution to be cheerful.

“Johnny” comes in, screaming at the top of his lungs, with his new pantaloons slitted from top to bottom ; the cook makes the pie crust of bread dough, and dresses the steak with the ends of tallow candles, because the butter is down cellar ; and a friend comes home with her husband to dinner, and he looks thunderbolts, and the friend consternation—but never mind—“dress, laugh, and go out”—forget death, and it will forget you—either be well, or die, quickly, for friends are all “sorry for” your *husband*.

“Complaining women never die,” is an old saying, handed down to us from the lips of some rough country quack, who deserved to have had his teeth extracted for his want of sympathy with suffering ; and the same unkind thought is written on the sarcastic mouth of many a modern M. D. to whom the poor invalid appeals for help, as she drags her weary limbs over the rough path of life without hearing one word of sympathy, or seeing a single finger raised to help her. None realize that her life-strings are snapping asunder so slowly and so noiselessly ; and when the last gives way, and she sinks into the friendly grave, friends hardly miss her, because they have learned so gradually to do without her labours of love.

She is gone ! the world feels not the shock of her departure, as when some great human light fades from the firmament of mind ; and social institutions are not saddened by her loss, for her pale face was almost a stranger in their halls.

But there are little loving hearts which miss her gentle tone, earnest kiss, and loving blue eyes; and her husband misses for a little time her sweet, mournful smile, which seemed to say, "I would do more to promote your happiness—but I am so feeble,"—and then he forgets, and another more beautiful is taken to his heart and home; and with dewy eyes and quivering lips those babes pronounce again the name of "Mother!"

But not to her bosom do they confide all their little griefs and wrongs—not there do they sob themselves to sleep. She is long an object of doubt and dread; and angel although she may be, it is long, very long, ere she will win them to confidence and love. Every dying mother thinks of this, and every stepmother should realize it, and have patience and piety to begin her work; for the heart of the child will appeal from the mother that *is*, to her who is not, when the requirements of the former approach even the shadow of injustice.

Husbands of invalid wives, (in nine cases out of ten,) *we do not pity you*—you who go in and out so carelessly, asking no questions, and never saying, in a soft, earnest tone, "Would to God that I could help you, dear wife!" You who do not try to realize the capriciousness of the appetite which longs for everything beyond its reach; who have no sympathy with morbid fears, and no true-hearted mother's apprehensions, lest your babes may be prematurely cast upon the sympathy of the world—that sympathy which freezes by the coldness of its healing hand.

Sympathy for you? What do you suffer aside from inconvenience? Think, impatient men, as you look

upon that faded form, of what she was, remember her, as you took her, a beautiful bride, away from the bosom of her mother, and her father's strong, protecting arm—did *she make no sacrifice for you?* Know that for your love she fettered herself with those cares which have racked her brain until they undermined her slender constitution; and do not cause her now to say in her heart's deep agony, “I have become an encumbrance, and he will not miss me when I am gone.”

Pity the invalid. Part the damp locks upon her forehead, and kiss it tenderly; leave her not long alone; love her, and cherish her as you did when the white bride rose lingered in her sunny tresses, and the carnation of health was upon her rounded cheek; for surely, though slowly, she is dying; and when she is gone an angel will have gone up to Heaven before you to plead for you at the eternal bar, saying, Father, remember him in mercy, as he remembered me, after all others forsook me, and life was one long agony.



“THE OLD FOLKS.”

“I SUPPOSE I must go down and see the old folks, pretty soon, but it is a dull job,” said a fashionably-dressed young man to me one evening. “The country is so dull, after living in the city, that I dread to go there; there is nothing to look at, and nowhere to go; but mother is getting pretty feeble, and I ought to go.”

I perceived that the "old folks" he so disrespectfully spoke of were no other than his own father and mother.

"I could get along with one day well enough," he said, "but the old folks are never satisfied unless I stay a week, or three or four days, and I get heart-sick of it, it is so dull. I used to go and see them once or twice a year, but now it is between two and three years since I have been there. I could go oftener, but it is so tedious; and then they make so much of me, and cry so when they see me, that it makes me feel bad, because I do not go as much as I ought; so sometimes I think I will not go at all."

How little had this careless son thought of his aged parents, and how daily, how hourly had those aged parents thought of him, and how many fervent prayers had ascended to God for him from that quiet fireside! He knew not how many evils those prayers had averted from his ungrateful head, or how many blessings they had poured upon him.

But all sons are not thus ungrateful. A young friend of mine, who has resided sixteen years in the same great metropolis, has never failed twice a year to visit his parents and goes oftener, or whenever it is possible for him to leave his business. I accidentally saw a letter he addressed to a sister a short time since, which shows that a young man can be immersed in extensive business, and yet find time to love and venerate his mother.

"I received a short note from mother," he writes, after hearing that she had been ill. "I am fearful that she is not improving. If she is any worse, or becomes dangerously sick, I desire to know it. I dread the

thought that my, our mother, cannot be spared to us many years at best—it may be but a few months. I have thought of it very much for a few weeks. Although she has lived nearly her threescore years and ten, and nature has become almost exhausted, yet how I should miss her! how we all should mourn for her! What a mother she has been to us! What a woman; what an example; what a Christian! I am sure of it, I know it, that she has been my dearest object of love and affection all the days of my life. However I may have strayed from her bright examples and her teachings, my mother has always been before me, beckoning me to walk in the right way; and if I have not prayed myself with the fervour and devotion that I should, I have always felt that she was supplicating for me. How much she has loved us, how much she has cared for us! What a sacred treasure, even to the end of our lives, will be the memories of our mother!

“I see her now, as she looked to me, when she stood by the bedside of our dying brother, cheering him in his sufferings; and I hear her say, “The same clock that told the hour of his birth is now telling the hour of his death!” What a scene was that! We know, dear sister, that these things must be, and it is not in a melancholy strain that I write; but every indication of the approaching end of my mother stirs within me all the tenderness of my heart. Her removal will be to the *brightest* heaven, die when she may. Old age is but the threshold of death, and after a life spent as our mother’s has been, the portals of another world can have no dreary look.”

How ennobling, how touching are this young man's words! We cannot but respect him for his beautiful reverence and love for his mother. Years of a life in New York, subject to every snare and every temptation, engaged in an engrossing and extensive business, with the heat and passion of youth upon him, yet the one steady flame of deep love for his mother burned undimmed in his heart.

Mothers, she was a mother worthy of such a son. She was a Christian mother. Would you inspire similar love and reverence? Be like her, an earnest and heartfelt follower of the blessed Redeemer.

And let every heartless, neglectful son remember the thorns of agony his thoughtlessness implants in the hearts of his parents. Let him call to remembrance the helpless years of his childhood, and all the self-sacrificing love that fills their hearts, and now return to them and to God the love and gratitude which are so justly due.



#### OBEDIENCE, HOW TAUGHT TO CHILDREN.

[UNLESS taught in earliest infancy, obedience cannot be taught, or very imperfectly, and with tenfold difficulty. The following scene, from Grace Aguilar's *Home Influence*, affords an illustration of the lessons which there are frequent opportunities of inculcating in every young family.]

Mrs. Hamilton is a young mother, and the little boy



her only child. Eleanor, Mrs. Hamilton's sister, thinks firmness with so young a child unnecessary severity.

The day before Eleanor's intended departure, the sisters were sitting together, and little Percy, who now ran firmly without any falls, was playing about the room. He had already displayed a high spirit and passionate temper, with their general accompaniment, self-will, even in trifles, that Mrs. Hamilton felt would render her task a trying one; but she was firm as she was gentle, and faced the pain of contradicting her darling bravely.

"Do not touch that, Percy, love," she said, as her little boy stretched out his hand towards a beautiful but fragile toy, that stood with other nick-nacks on a low table. The child looked laughingly and archly towards her and withdrew his hand, but did not move from the table.

"Come here, Percy, you have not played with these pretty things for a long time;" and she took from her work-box some gayly-coloured ivory balls, which had been his favourite playthings, but just at present they had lost their charm, and the young gentleman did not move.

Mrs. Hamilton knelt down by him, and said quietly,

"My Percy will not disobey mamma, will he?"

"Me want that," he replied, in the pretty, coaxing tone of infancy; and he twined his little round arms caressingly around her neck.

Mrs. Hamilton felt very much tempted to indulge him, but she resisted.

"But that is not a fit plaything for you, love; besides it is not mine, and we must not touch what is not ours.



Come and see if we cannot find something just as pretty, that you may have."

And after some minutes' merry play in her lap his mother hoped he had forgotten it; but the little gentleman was not, he thought, to be so governed. The forbidden plaything was quietly grasped, and he seated himself on the ground in silent but triumphant glee.

Surprised at his sudden silence, Mrs. Hamilton looked towards him. It was his first act of decided disobedience, and she knew she must not waver. Young as he was, he had already learned to know when she was displeased, and when she desired him very gravely to give her the toy, he passionately threw it down, and burst into a violent fit of crying. His nurse took him struggling from the room, and Mrs. Hamilton quietly resumed her work; but there was such an expression of pain in her countenance, that Eleanor exclaimed,

"Emmeline! I have been watching you for the last half-hour, and I cannot comprehend you. Do explain yourself."

"I will if I can;" and Mrs. Percy looked up and smiled.

"Why would you not let that poor little Percy have that toy?"

"Because it would have been encouraging his touching or taking everything he sees, whether proper for him or not."

"But he could not understand that."

"Not now, perhaps; but I wish him to know that when I speak he must obey me. It is, I think, a mistaken doctrine, that we ought to give children a *reason*

for all we desire them to do. Obedience can then never be prompt, as it ought to be. And in fact, if we wait until they are old enough to understand the reasons for a command, the task will be much more difficult, from the ascendancy which wilfulness may already have obtained."

"But then why were you so cruel as to send the poor child up stairs? Was it not enough to take the toy from him?"

"Not quite, for him to remember that he must not touch it again."

"And do you really think he will not?"

"I can only hope so, Eleanor; but I must not be disheartened if he do. He is an infant still, and I cannot expect him to learn such a difficult lesson as obedience in one, two, or six lessons."

"And will he love you as much as if you had given it to him?"

"Not at the moment, perhaps, but when he is older he will love me more. And it is that hope which reconciles me to the pain which refusing to indulge him costs me now," replied the young mother.

"And voluntarily you will bear the pain which had almost brought tears into the eyes of the severe and stoical Mrs. Hamilton!" exclaimed Eleanor.

"It was a foolish weakness, my dear Eleanor, for which my husband would have chidden me; but there must be pain to a mother if called upon to exert authority, when inclination so strongly points to indulgence."

"Well, if ever I have anything to do with children I certainly shall not be half as particular as you are, Em-

meline. I really cannot imagine what harm gratifying yourself and Percy could possibly have done."

"If ever you have children, my dear Eleanor, may you have strength of mind and self-control sufficient to forget self, and refuse the gratification of the present moment for the welfare of future years!"

And so it came to pass. The contrast afforded by the domestic history of the families of the two sisters, as developed in Grace Aguilar's beautiful narrative, affords abundant illustration of the truth, that lessons of obedience must be commenced at life's earliest dawning. The good fruit is, usually, not long in appearing. A few years' patient and kind firmness will be rewarded by habitual, cheerful, and instant obedience.



## OUR HOMES.

GENIUS hath its triumphs, fame its glories, wealth its splendour, success its bright rewards, but the heart only hath its home. Home only! What more needeth the heart? What more can it gain? A true home is more than the world—more than honour and pride and fortune—more than all earth can give—the light the noon-day sun may not yield, and yet the tiny flame of one pure beam of love enkindleth, and sympathy makes to burn for ever.

Home! How more than beautiful thou art!—how like an untaught religion!—a golden link between the

soul and heaven!—when the presence of a pure heart makes thee radiant, and the music of their affection floats like the chorals of unseen cherubims around their tranquil hearth!

---

## MRS. WINTERFORD AND HER SERVANTS.

“CRASH! there, I wonder what Bridget has broken now!” exclaimed Mrs. Winterford, as she raised her head, listening, from the bed where she had been lying crumpled miserably up, under one of her attacks of nervous headache. “I think it must be the other large tureen; nothing else would fall so heavily. Oh, dear! we shall not have a dish left in the house at this rate. Why must people be tortured with such girls as Bridget? Such a breakfast as we had this morning! The toast burnt to cinders, and the steak pommelled through with slivers of bone, and garnished with ashes! I do believe a good breakfast would almost have cured my head. I thought, before we were married, that we should be so happy; and now one could scarcely find a more comfortless home than this. William does all he can, and more than he can afford, to make me happy. To think of hiring two girls for so small a family as ours, and then having nothing done as it ought to be: it is too bad. Oh, how that baby screams! it will drive me distracted. Catharine, bring him to me, and let me try to quiet him.”

And she crept from the bed to her rocking-chair,

pressing her hands to her temples as she did so, to repress the pain caused by the effort to rise.

“Where is Willie?” she asked as she took the child, who had screamed till he was almost in convulsions.

“I don’t know, ma’am,” replied Catharine: “he was playing on the front door-step when I came up.”

“In the street, I presume, under the heels of the horses,” said Mrs. Winterford, with a shiver. “Go and see to him immediately; I never allow him to play outside the front door. And bring me some hot vinegar and bandages, when you come up.”

Mrs. Winterford had lost her mother at an early age, and had been brought up in a boarding-house, so that, until her marriage, she had known nothing of household cares, or of the management of children. She had now been housekeeping five years, and during that time had tried over forty different girls. Of these some were better than others, but none were good. One was too slovenly to be endured, another was wasteful, some abused the children in her absence, some were dishonest, and others who seemed to do well at first would become very insolent and leave her suddenly without notice; so that, with one to another, the house was kept in constant confusion.

Besides this, her own health was poor, and her babe a nervous fretful child, who gave her little rest day or night; so that, although she loved her husband and appreciated his efforts to make her happy, she was constantly distracted and uncomfortable from the various sources of annoyance that surrounded her.

Catharine was gone a long time, and Mrs. Winterford,

after trying in vain to quiet the babe, and feeling too ill to sit up, attempted to call her. She looked for her hand-bell, but it was not in sight, and she then remembered that Willie had broken the breakfast-bell the day before, and that hers had been carried down to supply the place of it. She then tried to call her, but although she could hear her voice distinctly from the kitchen, which was in the basement directly below her room, she could not make herself heard; and, exhausted and disconsolate, she threw herself once more upon the bed, with the crying babe beside her.

Scarcely had she done so, however, when a loud uproar from the kitchen, mingled with Willie's screams, called her once more to her feet. This time she grasped the babe in her arms, and hurrying part way down stairs, called loudly to know what was the matter.

"Willie's pulled his bath-tub over on to him and broken his head, and wet every stitch there is in him," replied Catharine, screaming from the basement.

"Bring him to me."

"He's dripping with water, mum."

"Bring him to me this instant," said Mrs. Winterford, decidedly.

Willie was accordingly dragged up stairs, drenched to the skin, and his face covered with blood from a gash over the eye.

"How *did* this happen?" asked Mrs. Winterford.

"He pulled the bath-tub on him, as I was telling yez."

"Where was the bath-tub, that he could pull it on him?"



“It was setting on the corner of the sink, jist.”

“And why wasn’t it emptied?”

“Because I had everything to do, and no time to do it in. Ye called me up stairs”—— the rest of Catharine’s explanation was lost in an unintelligible mutter.

“Oh, dear!” sighed Mrs. Winterford; “couldn’t Bridget empty the bath-tub?”

“She says it’s no concern of hers, whether the bath-tub is emptied or not,” said Catharine.

Willie’s forehead was bathed and bandaged, his wet clothes taken off, and Catharine sent to the bureau to obtain fresh clothing.

“Where’ll I get it, mum?”

“In the middle drawer—this side.”

“There’s nothing here,” reported Catharine, after a few moments’ tumbling in the drawer.

“Why, yes there is. Don’t toss those things about so, and be quick.”

“Well, I can’t find a stitch of Willie’s clothes here,” said Catharine, after fumbling over the drawer a few minutes longer.

“It is impossible—he has ten full suits, and there must be some of them there. Where are the clothes from this week’s wash?”

“They’re not ironed yet.”

“Not ironed yet, and here it is Thursday! Well, there ought to be enough from last week’s wash to last this long while yet.”

“Bridget didn’t wash them last week; she put away the rest of the washing after that lady came to take dinner with you.”



“Put away the rest of the washing!”

“Yes, mum; she said she wasn't going to wait upon company and wash too.”

“Wait upon company! What in the world did she do? I was particular that she should not be called upon for a step more than usual.”

“That's what she did, mum.”

“Was there ever the like? Poor child! not a garment to put on, and there he stands shivering with the cold. Put down the windows, Catharine.” And Mrs. Winterford, seizing a ragged pair of stockings from the drawer, which she had approached to assist Catharine's search, attempted to put them on. The baby struggled and screamed, and she was obliged to desist. Catharine closed the windows, and was then directed to bring the soiled clothes that Willie had taken off the day before. As she returned from the closet, they were both startled by a ringing of the door-bell.

“Mercy!” exclaimed Mrs. Winterford. “If it's any callers, say that I am engaged; that I am ill. Don't let any one in.”

Catharine dropped the clothes in the middle of the floor, and went to answer the bell. The last hour's confusion had increased Mrs. Winterford's headache almost to distraction, and she now dragged herself dizzily to the spot where Catharine had thrown Willie's clothes, and attempted to put them on.

Catharine returned presently, saying, as she opened the door, “It's somebody has come to stop—a lady with two trunks; I put her in the parlour, and here is what she gave me.”

“Aunt Mary Markham!” exclaimed Mrs. Winterford, reading the card; “what could have sent her here now? She of all the world!—there never was a thing out of place in her house. Has the parlour been swept?”

“No, mum.”

“What shall I do? the candles burnt down in the sockets, and the books and papers on the floor, I dare say,” murmured Mrs. Winterford, as she remembered that her husband had been up long after she retired the night before.

“Willie’s been in there, playing horse,” said Catharine, anxious to assist her mistress in the list of aggravating circumstances on which she seemed disposed to dwell. But she had no further time to arrange her thoughts, for, at this moment, the door opened and Mary Markham entered.

“I was sorry I sent up my name,” she said, “after I heard you were ill; so I followed the sound of voices, and came up directly, lest you should think it necessary to make some preparation to receive me.”

Mrs. Markham was a woman somewhat past the prime of life, with a mild, calm face, and dark hair mottled with silver combed smoothly away behind her cap. Her figure inclined slightly to embonpoint, and there was that in her whole dress and manner that evidenced a wholesome, well-balanced tone of life. It was altogether an Indian-Summer look—with the flowers gone and the dry leaves rustling gently on the still air, but with the all-pervading sunshine still warm and genial, and grown more rich and mellow from its dalliance with life’s Au

tunn fruits. She had been the wife and was now the widow of a wealthy and influential farmer, in a distant state, and the mother of a large family who were now settled in life and occupying positions of usefulness. Mrs. Winterford had visited her once or twice during her early girlhood; but she remembered very little of her except that she was considered a model of mothers and housekeepers.

“What is the matter with your babe?” asked Mrs. Markham, after the first salutations and explanations had passed.

“Oh! I do not know,” replied Mrs. Winterford, anxiously; “he cries so a good share of the time. I do not think he’s well.”

“Poor little fellow!” said Mrs. Markham, taking him carefully from the hands of his nurse, who was flourishing him frantically through the air.

“Oh! don’t take him, aunt,” exclaimed Mrs. Winterford. “It is very hard for any one to hold him who is not used to it.”

Mrs. Markham folded him up in her arms, very much as if she was used to it; and Catharine, finding herself at liberty, began to gather up the wet clothes Willie had thrown off.

“Take them down and dry them by the kitchen fire,” said Mrs. Winterford, “so that he may have them again as soon as possible, and bring a floor-cloth to wipe the wet from the carpet.”

“What will I do with Willie’s clothes?” said Catharine, again entering the room after a short absence; “Bridget says she won’t have them by the kitchen fire—

they're in her way. The fire is all out, too. And she says she don't know how to cook them things the master has sent up for dinner."

"What are they?"

"Little birds, mum."

"Pigeons," said Mrs. Winterford, with a look of distress. She remembered that she had expressed a desire for some, a few days before, and now her husband had sent them up with a kind wish to do something to gratify her. "I must go down and see about it," she said, turning sadly from her efforts to arrange the room, with a suspicion that it was very late to cook pigeons even if she were well.

"Sit down, Mary," said Mrs. Markham, as she folded the quilt over the babe, which, somehow or other, had fallen quietly asleep in her arms; "or rather lie down, for I perceive you are quite too ill for anything else, and I will go down and show your girl how to cook the pigeons."

"Oh! Aunt Mary, I could never think of such a thing," exclaimed Mrs. Winterford, earnestly.

"Hush, my dear; there," and she arranged the pillows invitingly; "lie down, and try to quiet yourself. I have had my own way these forty years, and you must do as I tell you."

Mrs. Winterford was glad to crouch once more upon the bed, saying, feebly, as she did so,

"You never saw the inside of such a kitchen in your life, I am sure."

Aunt Mary had something very curious in her pocket, so that Willie was enticed to follow her softly out of the

room, leaving his mother, oh! so quiet—she could scarcely remember when it had been so quiet there.

Something like an hour had elapsed when Mrs. Markham returned, with Willie at her side, looking contented and happy, and his clothes, nicely dried and ironed, upon her arm. "I will put these clothes on Willie, now, if you like," she said, seating herself for the task.

"Why, how did you dry them so soon?" said Mrs. Winterford, looking up from the drowse into which she was falling.

"There is a good fire in the kitchen, now, and they dried very soon."

"Did you get Bridget's permission?" asked her niece, with a smile.

"No; I found a towel-frame and spread them out upon it, without troubling myself about her opinion in the matter. I put the pigeons in for a stew, but if you prefer them broiled they can be taken out for it when they are parboiled; there was not time to roast them—the girl said one o'clock was your dinner hour."

"You did not do it yourself, I hope?"

"Bridget helped me; but she did not understand it very well. I presume I have done more work of that kind than most people. But how will you have the pigeons?"

"Oh! I prefer them stewed, and I am very much obliged to you, indeed; but I really feel mortified, aunt, that you should have to go into my kitchen to work before you had scarcely untied your bonnet, and you tired with your journey too. Your travelling dress must have suffered."

“I always carry my big apron in the top of my trunk, wherever I go. Mother’s apron is a proverb in the families of my own children, and I spend most of my time with one or other of them. I have now been some weeks with my son in B——, so that I have only had a few hours’ ride in the cars, this morning, and am not at all fatigued. After making you a little visit, I am going on to spend the winter with Helen, who lives in W——. I am very glad I came just as I did. I don’t know what would have become of your headache and the dinner without me.”

“No I, indeed. I think some good spirit must have sent you. But how that baby sleeps. I verily believe you magnetized him; he never sleeps any.”

“I presume he is worn out; he looked so. You worry him too much.

“Worry him?”

“Yes; I mean you are too nervous yourself; you allow little things to trouble you more than you should.”

“Oh! aunt! but the little things are so very troublesome.”

“I have no doubt you find them so, but, for your own good and that of your child, you must endeavour to find them as little so as possible. There, Willie, go and kiss mamma, and tell her that you will keep in prime order until papa comes home to dinner. I told Bridget to make you a nice cup of tea, and you had better not try to get up or care for anything till your headache is over.’

“How kind you are! and, now, my guest-chamber is the front one on this floor. Here comes Catharine. She will bring you water and whatever you need.”



“I’m after carrying up the water and towels now,” said Catharine, who had just finished arranging the parlours and halls. Mrs. Winterford experienced a comfortable sensation of surprise that she should have thought of it herself, and Mrs. Markham departed to her own room, taking Willie with her, and advising her niece to keep Catharine near, in order that she might not be disturbed herself when the babe awoke.

“Bridget says she guesses *somebody* has come,” said Catharine, partly to herself, as she restored the soiled clothes to the closet.

“Am I then so much of *nobody* in my own house?” murmured Mrs. Winterford, burying her temples in the cool pillow.

But she, too, thought that somebody, or some good influence, had come into the house, when, shortly after, Catharine stood by the bed with the hot vinegar and bandages she had ordered so long ago.

“Will you have these now, mum?” she said.

Mrs. Winterford had almost forgotten them herself, and she could not but wonder how Catharine came to be so thoughtful.

---

“What do you think is the reason I am so troubled about my domestics, aunt?” said Mrs. Winterford, one day during Mrs. Markham’s visit. “I have changed till I am tired of it, and would rather put up with almost everything than run the risk of trying again.”

“A good servant is a very difficult thing to obtain,” said Mrs. Markham, after a few moments’ hesitation. “Those who are really efficient find room in other sta-



tions, in this country. Besides, I think the relation between mistress and servant is scarcely understood by our ladies, generally."

"How do you mean?"

"There are many who either do not govern their servants at all, or if they attempt it, do so with a sort of arrogance or uppishness that is offensive; and that is usually met on the part of the servant with the same kind of uppishness, only as much worse in degree as she is below her mistress in refinement."

"Then you think we really ought to govern our servants? I am not sure that our American servants would submit at all to that opinion."

"I presume they would submit to it if those they serve would first make sure of it. No one can rule with true dignity unless first convinced of her right to rule. A woman should, of course, be mistress of her own house in every part of it. A part of the agreement between your servant and yourself is, that she shall act under your authority, and this should be observed as much as any other part of the contract. Your immediate comfort depends upon her conduct more than on that of almost any other person. And the government and proper training of the servants in a household is, in my opinion, a much more difficult study than the training of our own children, of which we read, and hear, and talk so much. Not that we, by any means, take too much pains with these, but that we most woefully neglect the others. Our servants, for the most part, come to us after years of corrupt training; and

we have more to do to eradicate their bad habits than to teach them good. We must first settle in our own minds distinctly and exactly what we require of them, and then we must be sure that they understand it as distinctly. If, with this understanding, they do not choose to abide by your requirements, there need be no words about it. You must look elsewhere for your servants. But you must be sure that you require of them no more than is just and right. You should look to their comfort as much as to that of any other member of the family. Providence has placed them under your influence, and it is your duty to see how that influence is used. It is not enough to vote them all a nuisance, and after taxing your powers of endurance with their faults as long as you can, to shove them off and try others. It is in this way that the floating mass of servants have been banded from house to house all their lives, feeling themselves abused, and considering it their chief business to retaliate for that abuse. You must not expect them to fulfil every item of their duty towards you, before you have done your whole duty towards them. This would be to acknowledge them your superiors. And by as much as you consider their position and their tasks less pleasant than your own, by so much should you seek to give them some relaxation—some enjoyment. And you should endeavour, as far as possible, that their enjoyment be of a wholesome kind. They come in too close contact with your children for you to be indifferent to this. They may require patience, but it is certainly worth an effort; for there is no more important item of domestic comfort than a good servant, if you employ

one at all. Many remain through their lives a trouble and a nuisance in the families where they live, when a few kind words, and a little careful training, might have made them both useful and happy."

"What do you think of Bridget?"

"I think she has capacity enough for a good servant, if she had only a mind to use it."

"But she is so slovenly."

"True, she is; but then it is not because she does not know how to be neat. She does not like to take the trouble necessary to keep things in order. She apologized to me, the morning I came, for the dirty kitchen, and really made it quite neat that afternoon, before she went to ironing."

"But, aunt, I don't know how to explain it, but it certainly is true that the girls have both done better since you came here than I ever knew them before."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, I believe there is a sort of magnetism about it—that they feel as if you knew better how things ought to be done than I do. Why should she care so much more for having you see the dirty kitchen than for me?"

"People usually care more for strangers; and then I told her, when I went to show her about the pigeons, that it was impossible to have dinner by the time she named, without a quick, clear fire; and while she made the fire, I took the stove-brush and shovel, and made all things bright and new about the stove. There is nothing like giving them a model to copy from. Make one part of the kitchen clean for them, and they will endeavour

to bring the rest up to your standard, if they have any neatness about them."

"Why, aunt, I never thought it necessary for me to meddle with such things. It seems as if two girls could do my work without my being obliged to clean in the kitchen."

"But if you find it impossible to have things in order without, it is better to make the effort. The comfort you will experience will more than repay you. You always take care of the parlours and your own room, I believe?"

"Yes, when I am well. Catharine does it so badly that I am obliged to do it to keep comfortable; and this, with the plain sewing of the family, which I endeavour to do, is about as much as I can accomplish."

"I think you would do better to change with her occasionally—to put up with her careless sweeping, if you cannot teach her to do it well, while you go into the kitchen once or twice a week, or as often as you find necessary, and see that things are arranged to your mind. There is no department of your house that should be trusted entirely to your servants—if you wish to be a really good housekeeper, you should keep everything under your own eye."

"But, aunt, it would be impossible; with such health as I have, it would make me a perfect drudge—a slave. What would become of the children while I was in the kitchen, cooking steak, &c.?"

"I would not have you cook the steak yourself, but you should know how much is brought into the house, and where it is kept; and whether the grate is clear

from ashes, so that it can be properly cooked. Your visits to the kitchen may be brief, but they should be frequent and observing. You would find, if you superintended Bridget's work, and did some of the planning for her, that you would gain time enough to repay you. Catharine would not need to go into the kitchen to assist her nearly as often as she does, and thus time for plain sewing would be gained. I suppose you know very little about cooking yourself."

"Oh, I took lessons of Mrs. S.'s cook before I was married, but I often made failures, and I dislike to do it before my girls. It seems to encourage them in doing wrong. They really ought to know more about it than I, for they have done it all their lives."

"I think, my dear Mary, that you have had a very hard task with your lesson in housekeeping. Your inexperience and poor health have been serious drawbacks. You have had too much to learn at once. You know nothing about the care of children, and I have no doubt the worry they have caused you, and the trouble of poor servants, with the wish to have everything right, and the consciousness that it was not so, have had much to do with your ill health. I have always felt as if I had a matronly duty to perform to my sister's child, and my own namesake; but my family has been so large, and my cares so many, that I have had little time to think of it until lately."

"Thank you, aunt. I think you are doing it very well now. If you will only put off your visit to Helen until fall, as I have been urging you, I shall be very

grateful, and you will have the consciousness of having performed a good deed."

---

"Here is Aunt Markham, mamma—this is the carriage, isn't it?" cried Willie Winterford, as a carriage drew up at the door some years after Mrs. Markham's first visit to the Winterfords.

Aunt Markham looked as young and hale as ever, as she descended from the carriage, and grasped, one after another, the warm hands that were stretched out to welcome her.

"And you too, Bridget!" she said, as the broad Irish face of that functionary gleamed good-naturedly up from the end of the hall, to add her welcome to the rest; "are you here yet?"

"Oh, yes," returned Mrs. Winterford. "Bridget is part and parcel of us. I should about as soon think of leaving the family myself as of having her to leave it. We could not get along at all without her."

---

#### THE SPARE BED-ROOM.

MRS. EDWARD TRACY was said to have been brought up and trained in a good school of domestic management and family economy; and, as a general rule, she did not approve of spare bed-rooms.

It was all very well, to be sure, when her mother or her sister paid her a visit, to have somewhere to put



hem ; but then as Mrs. Brown, her mother, said, “ You know, dear, that I don’t often, and when I or Kate do come, it would be easy to make up a *shake-down* for Mr. Tracy, for a few nights, while we shared your bed.”

And so, no doubt, it would have been, if Mr. Tracy had liked the plan ; but he didn’t like it, and on this point he showed signs of intractability—very unreasonable, as Mrs. T. thought. So for the early years of his married life the gentleman maintained his ground, and kept his spare bed-room.

Mr. Edward Tracy was a good-natured, easy-tempered man, in a small way of business as a merchant, in the flourishing town of Blank ; that is, a small way with a qualification. It was not so small that he could not afford a neat little private residence in the semi-genteel quarter of the town ; but it was not large enough, by any means, to allow him to keep a carriage, nor even a riding horse : but then he did not want either. Neither was it so small that he had ever shrunk from entertaining a friend now and then ; and as he was somewhat given to hospitality, he had more friends of a sort, than enemies of any sort, and the “ now and then ” of his visitors were *not* like angels’ visits, few and far between. But neither was his business so large that he hadn’t taken a long time for consideration before entering on the grave cares of matrimony ; he ventured at last, however, and was congratulated by his female friends—those of them, at any rate, who were already settled in life—on having chosen so good a help-meet as Miss Brown ; for everybody knew, said they, what an excellent manager her mother is.



Well, and so she was; and so also did Mrs. Edward Tracy prove herself to be: and thence did it arise that there was one point on which, as we said, Mr. Tracy and Mrs. Tracy could not agree—and this was the spare bedroom.

Sometimes the disagreement commenced in a sort of coaxing way:—"Edward, dear, what a nice sitting-room that spare bed-room would make! Such a charming prospect from the window, and no alteration required but to take down the bed, and put in a few extra bits of furniture. The same paper-hanging would do, and the same chairs; and you know we have only that little parlour down stairs, and the drawing-room on the first floor. Of course we don't want to use the drawing-room every day, and the parlour is so dull, looking out into the dirty street, as it does. What do you say, dear?"

"I would have no objection in the world, Martha, if you would turn the parlour into a spare bed-room."

"Edward, how ridiculous!"

"I cannot see any other way, Martha, love; for you see we must have a spare bed somewhere. There's your mother's coming to spend a week with us soon; and what should we do with her?"

Mrs. Tracy hinted at the shake-down; but it would not do. "My old friend, Jones, is coming this way next month, and you see we must put him somewhere."

Martha gently remarked that next month would be a very inconvenient time to receive a gentleman visiter.

"But really, my dear, I cannot help it. We must try and make it convenient; Jones always has, for I don't know how many years, not missing one, paid me a

visit in August; and I told him that being married would not make any difference. You gave me leave to say that, Martha, love."

"Yes, but I did not know how inconvenient it would be." And there, for that time, the conversation dropped.

Sometimes the disagreement commenced in a way of economical calculation. Martha was a good hand at reckoning: she could demonstrate to a penny how much every visiter added to the expense of house-keeping.

There was Mr. Jones, for instance, whom, to give the lady her due of praise, she had received when she found there was no help for it, with politeness, and treated so that he had no cause for complaint; but there *was* Mr. Jones, who had prolonged his visit to a week. And only think how much that visit had cost!—so much for meat, and so much for drink, and 'twasn't a little that served him either; and so much for candle-light, and so much for an extra help for a whole day to put things in order after he had left, and so much for sheet-washing, and towel-washing, and so much for—

"Well, but, Martha—ah, Martha, thou carest for many things—but, Martha, I reckon these extras all in the lump with the rest; I always have done, love, and I don't see that I am much the poorer for them. At any rate, I can manage to pay my way, and something over; and that's a comfort. But I really think, my love, you were almost *too* kind to my old friend Jones, who would have been quite content, I am sure, with our plain way of living in general, instead of—"

Mrs. Tracy cut her husband short here. She had no

notion, she said, of doing things by halves. If she must have visitors, she would treat them as visitors.

“And why not as friends, my love? Just hear what Mr. Emerson says;” and Mr. Tracy took up a book which he had been reading before the discussion commenced, and read as follows:—“‘I pray you, excellent wife, involve not yourself and me, to get a curiously rich dinner for this man or woman who has alighted at our gates; nor a bed-chamber made at too great a cost——’”

Here Martha began to listen complacently: “That’s for you, Edward, I think.”

“If the cap fits me, I’ll wear it, my love, with a great deal of pleasure—‘nor a bed-chamber made up at too great a cost. These things, if they are curious in them, they can get for a few shillings in any village. But rather let the stranger see, if he will, in your looks, accent, and behaviour, your——’”

“I am sure Mr. Jones has no right to complain of my looks, and accent, and behaviour, Edward.”

“No, my excellent wife, he has not; but you stop me in an awkward place:—‘in your looks, accent, and behaviour, your heart and earnestness, your thought and will, what he cannot buy at any price in any city, and which he may well travel twenty miles, and dine sparsely, and sleep hardly, to behold. Let not the emphasis of hospitality lie in bed and board; but let truth, and love, and honour, and courtesy, flow in thy deeds.”

“All very pretty for a man to write,” retorted Mrs. Tracy; “but give the men the trouble, that’s all:—fidgeting, and cooking, and bed-making every day.”

But it was no use what Martha said. For the time, her husband was entrenched in his stronghold—and that was the spare bed-room.

Once, however, Mrs. Tracy gained a little ground. There was a Mr. Smith, and also a Mrs. Smith, who, without thinking it at all necessary to give due notice of their intentions, just looked in at Hope Cottage for a few days, in the course of an autumn excursion they were taking.

“Had it been anywhere else, friend Tracy,” said Mr. Smith, while making himself at home on the evening of his arrival, “I would have sent word beforehand: but said I to my wife—‘We needn’t take the trouble, for one is always sure of a welcome at this house. There’s always a spare bed-room for a friend, and a hearty welcome besides.’ Right there; wasn’t I?”

What Mr. Tracy said, or Mrs. Tracy thought, but did not say, in reply, is no matter. The Smiths were dull sort of people, and they stuck like leeches. Having taken possession of the spare bed-room, they kept possession so long, that even our friend Tracy’s hospitality and patience both were in danger of giving way, if it hadn’t been for his politeness. Martha kept her own counsel, and pretty much her own bed-room, too, under pretence of violent headaches, until her visitors were fairly gone; and then she lost her headache, and regained her speech.

“Now, Edward, is not this really too bad?”

“Well, my love, if you mean Mr. and Mrs. Smith’s making our house their inn, in so free and easy a man-

ner—yes, I think so too. It was going a little bit too far.”

“It is all because of that spare bed-room, which you will persist in keeping up, in spite of all I can say,” rejoined Mrs. Tracy, in a tone of genuine vexation.

“There’s nothing perfect under the sun, my love: every good thing has its attendant evils, and may be abused,” replied Mr. Tracy, philosophically.

“A spare bed-room isn’t a good thing, Mr. Tracy—drawing people to one’s house, whether or not. We might as well set up a common lodging-house or an inn. We should be paid for our trouble then.”

“But, Martha, dear, what should we do when friends whom we like to see, pop in? There are some, you know——”

“And if they are real friends, they wouldn’t mind a little inconvenience. Why not let them sleep out of the house? I dare say we might get a bed at some neighbour’s, for a night or two, where they might make a profit by having a spare bed-room. I am sure it would be better to pay a few shillings sometimes, than have all the trouble of sleeping visitors in our own house, and losing the use of the room for ourselves.”

“Tut—tut—tut!” exclaimed Mr. Tracy, and walked majestically out of the room, and out of the house also.

\* \* \* \* \*

Certain events happen in some families, which overturn all existing arrangements; and, not to be tedious, five years had not elapsed, before the constant dropping had worn away the great stone. In other words, you might have searched in vain from the bottom to the top

of Hope Cottage, and found never a spare bed-room. Mrs. Tracy had gained her point: the institution was abolished.

Mr. Jones had found this out, by being thrown out of doors on the first night of one of his annual visits, to make the best he could of a cold, dreary attic, which had been provided for him in a draughty old house, some distance off, where he lay shivering under the dread of damp sheets and nocturnal companions. He bore the infliction with a good grace, however, but took care to shorten his visit; and before the next August rolled round, had made an engagement to spend his holiday in another part of the country, with a friend, in whose house spare bed-rooms were not put out of fashion.

The Smiths had found it out, too, and left Blank, one day, in high dudgeon, not twenty-four hours after they entered it with far other intentions than so speedy a decampment. They had been committed to the tender mercies of the next inn, with a cold apology for the absence of the old spare bed-room. They never troubled the Tracys with another visit.

There was an old school-fellow, and stanch friend of Edward Tracy, who was subpoenaed to the assizes of Blank: and who, never doubting of a welcome, and in woful ignorance of the change which time had wrought, marched boldly up to the door of Hope Cottage, carpet-bag in hand, and by a *coup de main*, obtained possession of the passage. But the carpet-bag was doomed to go no further.

And we don't know anything more humiliating or



humbling, in a small way, than to be turned away from the very doors of a house where we have foolishly calculated on an extraordinary and enthusiastic reception, with the full assurance that we have reckoned without our host. We remember once to have been placed in such a predicament, and cannot, to this day, see a dog sneaking along with his tail between his legs, without being reminded of our mortification. We have taken care, ever since, to make no more such blunders. But this is a digression.

There was a brother of Edward Tracy, who said that, spare bed or no spare bed, he wasn't going to budge an inch, to say nothing of being turned out of doors at midnight. So he rolled himself up in his cloak, and with a brotherly recommendation to "Ned," to "go to bed and be bothered," threw himself on the hearth-rug before the fire, and made a spare bed of that.

There were rooms enough in Hope Cottage for every other purpose; but had the house been twice as large, it would not, under the new dynasty, have been large enough for a spare bed-room: and herein lay the excellent thrift of our good manager, who judiciously reckoned that every night's occupation of a spare bed-room by a guest, invited or uninvited, involved sundry other items in the way of dinnerings, supperings, breakfastings, and so forth, in the ordinary way, to say nothing of extraordinary *night-caps*, neither of silk, woollen, nor cotton.

There were inconveniences, to be sure, in this prudential course; but, on the whole, it worked well, Martha said; and as she kept her housekeeping book on the most approved and systematically exact plan, who could



know, if it did not? Not Edward Tracy, certainly, who now and then wondered what had become of so many of his old friends, who, so far as he knew, had neither fled the country, nor found a spare bed in mother earth; but who, to him, were as much lost as though they had never existed. And sometimes he sighed when he remembered with what pleasure he had once been wont to

“Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.”

But these were only occasional thoughts, for he acknowledged that, after all, it saved a vast deal of trouble in entertaining visitors, to have it widely known that his hospitality did not include both board and lodging.

\* \* \* \* \*

There was a letter one morning—nothing very unusual in *that*—but the letter was from an unusual correspondent. In some far, out-of-the-way corner of the country, lived an elderly maiden, distant cousin of Mr. Tracy. Poor Miss Fryer! The world hadn't used her well, or somebody in the world had not. Once upon a time, when she and all the rest of the world were half a century younger, she had no lack of friends, for she was rich: but riches had taken to themselves wings, and Miss Fryer became poor.

“Bless me!” said Mr. Tracy, opening the epistle, “if here isn't a letter from poor Cousin Peggy; and Martha—I say, Martha,” he continued, “couldn't we, just for once, put up a spare bed in the old room, for a day or two?”

A spare bed! bless the man, what did he mean?

“Why, Martha, here’s poor Cousin Peggy, writes, and tells me she is coming to Blank, and she wants me to take her in for a day or two.”

A pretty thing indeed, that: no, no, Mrs. Tracy said; she wasn’t going to have that trouble, she was sure. If Miss Fryer must come to Blank—though what such an elderly person could want to be gadding about for, she could not conceive; but if she must come, they must do the best they could with her, she supposed, but as to her sleeping in the house—no, no. She must do as their other visiters did—put up with the bed over the way.

“But, Martha, love, poor Peggy used to be very kind to me when I was a boy. Many’s the sixpence she has slipped into my pocket; and, poor old soul, she’ll be frightened to death to go into a strange house and sleep away from her friends. A strange whim, certainly, of poor Peggy, to travel so far from home; but as she has taken it into her head, why, Martha, love, let us see if we can’t make her comfortable.”

But Martha was obdurate.

“Very well, my love, then you must take it into your own hands, for I won’t,” said Mr. Tracy.

Poor Miss Fryer made her appearance at the time she had fixed. A little shrivelled and wrinkled, shaky old lady, in an old-fashioned, faded silk pelisse, which had been laid up in lavender it would be hard to say how many years. She was sadly nervous at finding herself so many miles from home, among so many strange faces:—even little Ned, as she persisted in calling Mr. Tracy, to the great annoyance of Mrs. Tracy,

was so altered, she declared, that she shouldn't have known him again.

On the cause of her journey, Miss Fryer was mysteriously silent; she had a little business to transact in the morning, or the next day, or the next day after that, she said, and perhaps she might get little Ned to help her in it; but she couldn't say more than that. And where should she put her box? It was not a big one, she said, for she didn't wish to cumber little Ned's house up too much; and might she (for all this passed in the first five minutes after the coach had "dropped her down" at Mr. Tracy's door),—might she step into her bed-room to set herself to rights a little?

"Oh, yes, of course; but,"——and then—"little Ned" slipping out of the room—came the explanation, curt, and straightforward, and blank, from Martha's lips; Miss Fryer was welcome to step into her (Martha's) room, to make any little change of dress she might require; but as there wasn't a spare bed-room in the house, Miss Fryer's box should be taken over the way, where Mr. Tracy had engaged a bed for her for a night or two, with an emphasis on the "night or two," as much as to say, "There, now, you know your doom."

There was an astonishing composure in the little old maid's reception of this astounding announcement. Well, she was but a little body, and she had reckoned she might have been put in some closet or other, but it did not signify at all; only she wouldn't trouble Mrs. Tracy to send her box over the way at present, if she would be so kind as to give it house-room for an hour or two. And, now she thought of it, she had a call to

make in the town, and she would go while her pelisse was on, and that would save a world of trouble. There was no occasion for Mr. Tracy to trouble himself to go with her. It was a good while, to be sure, since she was in Blank, but she could find her way; and nodding and smiling benignantly, and almost condescendingly on Mrs. Tracy, the little old lady tripped out at the door, and was gone before Martha could have counted twenty.

Mr. Tracy and Martha had not finished their wonderment at poor Peggy's erratic motions, when a fresh cause for wonderment sprang up. A knock at the door, a livery servant, and Mr. Hodges' compliments, and he had sent for Miss Fryer's little box. The lady was going to stay at Mr. Hodges'.

At Mr. Hodges'!—Mr. Hodges!—Hodges! The aristocratic solicitor! There must be some mistake.

No, not half a one. There was poor Peggy, and there she meant to be; and thither her little box followed her, on the shoulders of a porter whom the livery servant brought with him—he being too grand, by three yards of gold lace, to carry a box through Blank, even for his master.

The mystery did not last many days. There was an estate and an intestate death, and there were title-deeds, and there had been a search for the next heir or heiress; and there was Miss Fryer, whom the persevering Mr. Hodges had hunted out in her obscurity; and there had been letters passing backwards and forwards, and there were letters of administration taken out, and oaths to be taken, and signatures to be written, and powers to

be granted, and lawyers best know what besides. And Miss Fryer must come to Blank; and should Mr. Hodges send his carriage for her? and would she honour him by making his house her home while she should stay at Blank?

All this had passed and re-passed; but Miss Fryer remembered her "little Ned," and her old love for him, and thought that she would pay him a visit, as *poor* Cousin Peggy, and had made herself happy with thinking of the agreeable surprise she should create by appearing before him, in the end, a full blown gentlewoman,

"With a plentiful estate."

But Miss Fryer didn't want perception, and had as much weakness in her way, as Martha Tracy had in hers. And without deigning to call again at the house where she had received so cool a reception, and refusing even to see "little Ned," when he made a call at Mr. Hodges', she started homewards, in the attorney's carriage, as soon as the "little business" was settled.

Nobody knows how Miss Fryer has made her will, or to whom the estate will descend; but we fear our friend Edward Tracy will have but a small slice of poor Cousin Peggy's leavings.

They say he has fitted up his spare bed-room again. But such a chance for a good legacy doesn't happen every day in the year; and we fear that Mr. Tracy has "locked the stable-door after the steed is stolen."

## DUTY TO PARENTS.

How seldom do children repay all they owe to the parents who have fostered their days of helplessness! how seldom do they reflect on the magnitude of their obligations towards them! The old father or mother are shoved aside, while we shower our loving attentions on a stranger. We appear to fancy that, because we can be kind to them any day, their claims may be indefinitely postponed—they may “manage” while the alien is courted. Like our Maker, they, our earthly fathers, have the least portion of our time. And yet we would not willingly be ungrateful to Deity or parent—we own our vast debt to each, but in words only—we make no attempt to repay it, though they are not harsh creditors, and though so little would satisfy them.

Why is it so? Is it because use has deadened gratitude? We are so accustomed to accept parental sacrifices that they become matters of course; we take them as habitually as our daily bread, and they excite as little emotion and thankfulness; yet if either were denied us, we should make the air resound with our clamorous complaints. Stop the supplies, and we discover how necessary they have been to our well-being and comfort. When deprived of a parent's cherishing presence and support, we find our irreparable loss; so, when unable to enjoy the blessings of religious communion and thanksgiving, we first truly appreciate their inestimable value.

No more than we need always be in an ecstasy of



prayer, if it necessary that we should be everlastingly chanting the parental praises; but we should at least foster, even when we do not express gratitude; and then we should find a thousand channels for giving vent to the feelings. Once excited, it will easily show itself. The great danger is our liability to forget, or rather never to think on the subject. Want of reflection is the rock on which we split.

There are but few among us who have not even exaggerated ideas of filial love on paper—how far do we carry them out? We would gladly, like Mademoiselle de Sombreint, the French heroine, swallow the cup of human blood, drain the disgusting potion to the dregs, to save a father's life; but are we sufficiently careful of his every-day comforts?

We may never be called on to risk our lives for a parent's—to place our honour in the scale against theirs—to their existence—to purchase their comforts by the sacrifice of a broken heart—to do one of the thousand-and-one things that are so beautifully interesting in history and romance. In the enthusiasm of the moment we would cheerfully die for them. Pride carries us on—pride and excitement; we scarcely feel the sacrifice; but could we daily offer ourselves up, in petty, ignoble efforts, often unnoticed and unrewarded? These are the difficulties which try affection; and yet, as more heroical actions are seldom or never required from us, in these alone can our affection be fairly tested—on them do our parents' comforts chiefly depend.

The savoury mess for the old man—affection endeared it to Isaac. It was not mere gluttony that drew down



that warm blessing on the impostor's head. No, the patriarch felt grateful for many small attentions which had lightened the weight of years. His wishes had been consulted, his tastes remembered. "Bless me, too, oh my father!" Alas! may it never be our fate to utter that cry in vain! may it never arise too late!

I am not now speaking of the commonly respectful demeanour, of the provision which every child of commonly good feeling would allow the dependent parent—I wish to avoid all approaching to an extreme case, and to confine myself to the commonest routine of daily duties. It may be our fate to be placed in circumstances which oblige us to take a different view of duties from our parents. They may require what we cannot grant; but every-day attentions are always in our power, and will sweeten an unavoidable opposition. We can remember the favourite dishes, and procure them, as our infant tastes were consulted, or give up our employment to join in the nightly rubber: it may be tiresome, but how often did they throw aside their pursuits to comply with our childish requests! We may differ in opinion with them, but we need not parade our difference before the world; ten to one we may be right; for each year imperceptibly brings new ideas and manners which they are slow to perceive, but we need not painfully force the change on them. Old age fondly looks back to the scenes of youth—let them not see that their children scorn feelings, institutions, hopes, that were so dear to them. There has been such a mighty advance within the last few years—we have enjoyed such numberless advantages—that there is but small vanity in supposing that

we may be wiser than our forefathers; but must we therefore constantly contradict their most cherished prejudices? Let us at least dissent in silence. When we yield, let it be cheerfully: let them not feel that the attentions on which their comfort so depends are unwillingly bestowed.

A soothing voice, modulated to the deadened ear of age; a willing compliance with little whims; a constantly respectful manner; these are proofs of gratitude daily within our power, and but too seldom rendered. The common politeness instantly granted to a stranger is seldom accorded to the parent, even when we love them most dearly. Should we like this manner adopted towards ourselves? It has been well observed that the Christian's golden rule, "Do unto others as ye would be done by," is the most perfect code of good manners.

The impatient tone when called on to repeat some trivial remark, the careless way in which we assist in their amusements, are alike wrong, and wounding to them.

A stranger calls on us for some hackneyed air. We instantly smile, and comply with his demand, while papa is snubbed, if his favourite tune be not ours also. It sometimes becomes necessary to check the garrulity of age; this to a well-disposed mind is a most painful task—then let it be done kindly and respectfully.

How often, too, do we see daughters lolling on their sofa while their mother is toiling in the household? Can we believe in affection which quiets itself by the remark, "that poor mamma is so very active?" Why is she so, young lady? Because you, in your thoughtlessness,

allow it. It has continued from year to year—from when you were too young to remember; and therefore it never strikes you that your duty should bid it cease. Your mother is as well fitted for leisure, elegant or otherwise, as yourself. Your selfish indolence alone denies it her, and yet you calmly sign yourself her “affectionate daughter.” ‘Is it right, also, that she should be meanly dressed, while you step out arrayed like a print in a fashion-book? How calmly you appropriate her ornaments, plume yourself in her feathers! Take her place for awhile; relieve her of some portion of her cares. Thus only can we hope that your weekly prayer has been heard; that you do “honour your father and your mother;” that you have been “enabled to keep this law.”

---

## THE TWO PARTINGS.

## A PAGE FROM MY CHILDHOOD.

It was yet early in the autumn; but, from the great maples that grew on either side my mother's door, leaves gloriously red and golden dropped one by one; or when the merry wind called for them as it passed, came down in little rustling showers, and danced along with their gay companion, quite wild, it seemed, to find themselves, for the first time in their lives, so far away from home.

I sat upon the door-step, where the afternoon sun fell broad and warm, and watched the wind and the whirling leaves with a heavy heart.

For a long time I had not moved nor made the least sound, nor scarcely dared to breathe, for my poor little brother's head rested in my lap. He was sleeping, and I would not have awoke him for the world.

As he lay there, so white and still in the clear sunlight, I could see how ill he looked, and I felt that what the doctor said was true. Alfred must die. He would go and live among the angels; and, instead of the little, shrivelled, deformed body that had given him so much suffering here, he would wear a form as lovely as his beautiful, dear face had always been. He would be well and strong. He could run and leap like other boys. He would not need me there, to wheel him through the garden-walks, nor to gather for him the flowers he loved. But I—what should I do?—oh! what should I do without my brother? The tears I had so long suppressed, and sobs I could not control, burst forth in a sudden flood of grief, and shook me from head to foot. He opened his loving eyes. He drew down my face to his with both hands, and kissing me said, in his own sweet voice, that was always soft and cheerful,

“Don't cry, Molly, don't! You wouldn't, if you knew how happy I am.”

But I only sobbed the more bitterly. “What shall I do? What shall I do?”

“It won't be for so very long, Molly,” he said; “and I shan't be *really* gone, you know. I shall be near you all the time, and shall love you just the same. No matter how pleasant Heaven is, I will never forget you for one minute, *dear* Molly—never, never! No; not if you

stay here years, and years, and years, I will never stop loving you—I will never get tired of waiting for you.”

“But I won’t stay years and years,” I cried, passionately; “I don’t want to stay years and years. I want to die. I want to go with you. I will pray to God every day. I will tell Him I do not want to live in this hateful world without you, and He will let me go—I know He will let me go.”

I knew, in my heart, that these were wicked words; and when I saw the trouble in my brother’s face, I feared he was going to tell me that I was a very naughty girl, as I surely deserved he should. But he said,

“I am afraid I have been selfish to think so much about going to Heaven, and to feel so happy thinking of it, when you cannot go, too. I am sure, if it had been any pleasant place in this world, I should not have felt so; but somehow Heaven seemed different. Still, I know I have been selfish. Dear Molly, forgive me, won’t you?” he asked, eagerly, while the great tears gathered in his eyes. “I would stay if I could. I would not leave you if God would let me stay.”

Such gentle words were harder to bear than any reproach. They filled my heart with shame, and, in a voice broken by fresh sobs, I begged him to be happy again, and said I was glad he was going, and that he had never been selfish, but always so kind and good, just as good as God’s angels, and it was I who was a wicked, wicked, selfish girl; but, if he would only be happy once more, I would be happy too. Yes, I said again, I was glad he was going; and I should be happier than I had ever been in all my life, thinking of him in Heaven. I

was happy now! And I dried my eyes hastily on the corner of my apron, and, pushing back my hair, looked at him and smiled. I am afraid it was not a very joyous smile, but it restored the cheerfulness to his face, and a sudden peace to my own heart, so that my tears flowed back to their source, and seemed to lie there like a clear and tranquil pool in which the heavens are reflected.

For some moments we sat in silence. Then he said, thoughtfully,

“Mother will miss me, too; and Bobby. I know you will do all you can for mother, to make her happy; and for Bob. Poor Bob! I am going to Heaven, where it is always summer; and, by-and-bye, you and mother will come too; but poor Bobby will never go to *his* home, in the beautiful island that Uncle Robert brought him from. When it snows, Molly, will you turn the back of his cage to the window, and put the geraniums and the rose-tree where he can see them, so that he may think it is summer?”

“Yes,” I replied, solemnly, “I will do all you say, and everything I can think of to make you happy.”

“And tell Uncle Robert, when he comes, that I left my love for him. I should have liked to have stayed and seen him, but I shall not be here then. Tell him how tame Bob is, and how much I loved him, and how sweetly he sings, and what fun we have had with him. Will you help me in, now, Molly?” he added, after a pause; “I am tired, and should like to go to bed.”

---

Two weeks had passed, and the crimson of our maples



let through great patches of sunny sky ; in the chestnut-grove, the ripe nuts rustled down through their scanty, yellow foliage ; and, like the little robins of old that covered the children in the wood, a gentle wind fluttered into the church-yard, bringing the bright fall leaves, and dropped them silently on a new-made grave, where we had laid the little earthly garment our angel had worn whilst he was with us.

I sat there all alone, and I was happy just as I told Freddy I would be ; for I thought of him all day, and I dreamed at night such bright dreams ! so full of soft, angelic voices, and radiant faces, and sunshine that came to me from my darling brother's new home. And the words he spoke, too, that last day, kept murmuring in my heart like a living fountain of perfect trust—

“ I shan't be *really* gone, you know. I shall be near you all the time, and shall love you just the same.”

How could I be otherwise than happy ? I was willing now to stay in this world years and years. Yes, I was willing to stay a thousand years, I thought, if God wanted me to, and if He would only help me to grow more and more like Alfred, so that when, at last, it was time for me to go to him, he might see I had tried to be a good girl, and was worthy to live with him, and be his own sister. I knew God had promised to help all who tried, and I intended to try very hard.

Full of these musings, I arose from the grass, by the little grave where I had been sitting, and pursued my way homeward.

Only one thought troubled me. Since Freddy left us Bob had drooped, and would not sing. I dressed his cage



with evergreens. I fed him on apples and sugar. I petted, and talked to him: I talked to him of Freddy, but he only answered by a plaintive chirp that went straight to my heart. It seemed to say, "He has gone to his heaven, and, by-and-bye, you will go too. But *my* bright home is far, far away; there my brother sits alone, in the great tree, and mourns for me, and I shall never go to him—never, never!"

So, as I went towards home, my thoughts turned to Bobby, and the promise I had given my brother to do all I could for the happiness of his little pet.

I was so absorbed that I walked straight up the garden-path to the door, before I saw that some one stood there, and stretched out his hands to me.

He caught me in his arms, and carrying me into the house, sat down, and placed me on his knee. It was my dear, kind Uncle Robert.

"Oh, uncle!" I exclaimed. "Have you been here long?"

"No, my pet, not ten minutes," he replied, in a voice which he tried to make steady and cheerful, for my mother's sake and mine; but he was greatly agitated, for the news of Alfred's death had come upon him suddenly, and he loved my brother very much. I hid my face in his bosom, and for a time we sat quite silent.

At length I whispered, softly, "Freddy left a message for you, uncle. He left his love for you; and he would have liked to have waited and seen you, but he could not. And he said Bob had grown very tame, and he loved him very much, and he sang very sweetly, and we had a great deal of fun with him."

I suppose Uncle Robert could not trust himself to reply to this message, for he only said, "To-morrow, Molly, I must be off. We are bound for another long voyage."

"Where to, uncle?" I asked.

"To the Southern Seas again."

"To the island where Bobby came from?" I inquired, eagerly.

"Yes, to poor Bob's old home."

I looked at him with wistful eyes, and my heart fluttered; for a new, bright thought had come into it, and I dared not speak lest he should refuse me—lest he should oppose me.

"What does my Molly want?" he asked, tenderly smoothing my hair. "Speak out, little one. Anything, within the range of possibility, I will do for you. I would bring you home the whole Archipelago in my pocket, if I could."

"I am afraid you will say no, though, or you will try to persuade me not."

"I will not say no, if it is possible to say yes; and I will not try to persuade you not. Honour bright!" he said, smiling, "I promise I will not raise a single objection, not even if you ask me to kidnap a young savage for you to play with."

"I don't want you to bring me anything. It's about Bobby." I hesitated.

"Go on!" said my uncle, encouragingly.

And I continued: "Just before Freddy went to Heaven, he said he was so sorry for Bob, because he had been taken away from his beautiful island, that was like

Heaven to him. And he asked me, would I turn the back of his cage to the window when it snowed, and would I put the flowers by him, and would I do *everything* I could to make him happy? and I promised I would; and I have done all I can, and he is not happy. He thinks about Freddy, and he thinks about his own brother in the beautiful island, and he will not sing. But I know what would make him happy; and I want you to take him back with you to his own home, where his brother is waiting for him, just as Freddy is waiting for me, only Freddy knows I shall be sure to go to him some day, but Bob cannot go unless you take him, because little birds are not like little boys, you know; they do not live for ever."

I paused, quite out of breath, and looked eagerly for a reply, but my uncle did not speak; he only kissed me, and, drawing my head down on his shoulder, laid his cheek upon my hair.

I was quite content, however, for I knew that Uncle Robert never broke his word.

The next morning I was up betimes, and out in the woods, gathering the brightest of evergreens and branches, to deck Bob's cage with for the last time.

I completely walled it in, and thatched it with hemlock, to keep out the cold wind, and crowned it with a regal crown of flaming autumn leaves. Then I busied myself preparing a bag to contain seed, filled it, labelled it, and sewed it up carefully.

So the hours slipped away; and in the afternoon my uncle, after listening with the kindest patience to a thousand-and-one directions which I gave him for Bob's com-

fort during the voyage, bid us farewell; and, with the cage in one hand and his portmanteau in the other, turned down the street of our little village.

I stood at the door, and watched him till he was out of sight; and then my heart sank. Oh, it was hard to part with Bob! I loved him for his own sake, but a hundred times more for Alfred's. It seemed almost as if he were a part of Freddy, and it was like parting with my brother over again to lose him.

Perhaps it was selfish, but I was not a little angel yet, like Freddy; I was only a poor little girl, and just then I felt very sad and lonely. So I ran away and hid, and threw myself on my face, and cried passionately and long.

After awhile, though the sobs came slower, and my burning eyes grew cool, it seemed as if I heard the dear voice, saying, "Don't cry, Molly, don't! You wouldn't, if you knew how happy I am!" and I was comforted, and fell asleep, and God let Alfred send me a dream as beautiful as Jacob's, when he slept with his head upon the stone. So that when I awoke, I felt not only quite calm and cheerful, but almost as happy as the angels of Heaven.

---

"ONE SET APART."

LITTLE Josey had been alone a long, long while. He had broken his china dogs, pulled the fringe off from the table-cover, admired the variegated birds worked on the footstool, until he turned it over—had crawled to the

patch of sunlight resting on the roses on the carpet, and clutched at the golden rings, and played with his transparent fingers. Still no one came. He fretted, then looked with a sudden, quiet, and vague expression into the fire, magnetically drawn by the bright coals shining through the high fender, into an admiration of its beauties. Then, as the loneliness of his situation again recalled itself to his mind, he cried again softly, and with large tears running down his plump rosy cheeks.

Josey was cold, hungry, and frightened—he had never been alone before; and the first formed word his little tongue had ever uttered, passed moaningly his pouting lips—"mamma!" "mamma!"

Poor little Josey! He did not know that she who would have caught him in her arms, and covered him with kisses at this first token of intellect, could no longer hear him; that she rested on her stately couch, pale as the snow-drops they placed beside her, with her hands calmly folded upon her meek bosom, and a deep solemn sleep settling upon her sweet young face.

He did not know, little lone orphan, how her hand had been clasped in prayer, and that when her soul went on that long journey, it carried with it a prayer for him to the throne of grace; that the thought of him was the only cloud upon her heart, as she hastened to join the beloved one who had gone before.

No. Josey knew not this. He cried still piteously, until strangers came with kind words and sad faces, and carried him down stairs. As he passed *her* door, he instinctively murmured the new word "mamma!" "mamma!" until they hushed him. Then bewildered, fright-

ened, and weary, he cried, and, hiding his head among the pillows of the familiar cradle, sobbed himself to sleep.

Smiles dimpled his flushed face in that sleep. An angel mother held him in her arms, soothed his trembling lips, and whispered words of love into his ear. Still he did not know that he was an orphan. Alas, poor child, he learned it soon enough!

The fine house was sold, and all its elegancies. Expenses were paid, and the small sum remaining put in trust for the boy into the hands of a man of integrity. Josey lived in his family. There were other boys and girls, but they were all "to the manor born." Josey was an intruder.

He was always a shy, quiet boy, and grew still more so amid this childish throng. He sought out dark corners, and glided into them unperceived. He talked to himself, when alone, and shared no joys or sorrows. He was unlike other children; *they* had *mothers*. He would watch the mother as she impulsively caught to her heart some little prattler, and turn away sadly. No one kissed *him*. No one looked with pride upon *his* copy-book. No one tied *his* tippet about his neck with care. No one stole on tiptoe at night to his bedside to see if he were comfortably and happily sleeping. No one saved cakes and candy for *him* in the bureau-drawers, or stuffed *his* dinner-basket with a favourite morsel.

No. He was "one set apart." He must take what comes, and be thankful.

Poor little Josey! Even the teachers knew he had no mother, and neglected him, or remembered him in long



tasks, so hopelessly hard that none but a *mother* could have made easy. And when his head or heart ached, there was no breast to bear all his troubles; no hand to cool the fever of his brow with its gentle, caressing touch. Poor Josey!

---

A change had gradually passed over Josey. He had grown thin and pale; his eyes were large and unnaturally bright; his form fragile and shadowy. Friends whispered when he passed, and boys made room for him by the winter fire. Little girls shared their dinners with him. Everybody was so kind that he could never do enough for them.

One day, as he sate by the fire sad and dispirited, the tears *would* roll down his cheeks.

"Why does Josey cry?" said a little child, to her mamma.

"The poor boy has no mother," returned the parent.

"Yes," cried the child, with eager voice and manner, "yes, Josey *has* a mamma; she is an angel in Heaven."

The lady took the child in her arms and kissed her, while these words sank deep into Josey's heart.

"I *have* a mother," he whispered perpetually to himself; "I will find her."

---

The sun rose proudly up one bright Christmas morning, and shone in upon Josey's bed, tinging his brown hair with gold, and calling him sluggard, lighting up temptingly the dark corner where hung the full stocking.

Doors opened and closed. Merry laughter rang through the hall. A gay throng came dancing in.



“Josey, Josey, I wish you a merry Christmas!”

They crowd around his bed. He sleeps so deeply, and lies so still. His face is white—although the thin lips wear a smile. They shudder, and cry loudly,

“Josey is dead!”

Yes, Josey has found his mother, and the angels in Heaven are singing “A happy Christmas to you, Josey!”



#### COUSIN HETTIE AND HER MOTHER-IN-LAW.

I HAVE just been writing a long, long letter to Cousin Hettie. I do not think it advisable to send more than three closely-filled sheets at once, so I will indulge my present mood by writing of her.

Hettie is a darling creature—I wish I might be as good and lovable. She is not beautiful—she has a quiet, unobtrusive face, which you might, and probably would, pass unnoticed at first sight; yet she has such a sweet voice, and when she becomes animated in conversation, her face is so full of expression that many a beauty might envy her the admiration which, all unconsciously to herself, she calls forth.

Left an orphan at an early age, she was received into my father's family, and we considered her as quite one of ourselves. She certainly was a treasure to us, so active, so cheerful, so ever attentive to the wishes of those around her. Sensitive almost to a fault, she studied her own quick feelings that she might avoid wound.

ing those of others—but, pardon me, I did not intend to write of Hettie in her relation to us.

Last June, on her eighteenth birth-day, she was married to Henry Huntington, whom we considered fully worthy of her. I could not bestow higher praise. He wished to take his bride to his parental home, immediately on their marriage, but she desired to take a long tour in the opposite direction. He very readily yielded to her wishes, though I think he would not have done so, had he known that it was not so much a wish to visit friends in C——, which made her so anxious to go there, as a dread of meeting his mother.

Three years before, with a heart brimful of romantic feeling—as what maiden's is not at fifteen?—she read Miss Bremer's *Neighbours*. It was one of the first novels she had been allowed to read, and every character was to her a reality, whose personal appearance was almost as clearly defined, in her mind, as that of the friends about her. *Ma chère mère*, with her overpowering dignity, made a strong impression upon her; she loved to think of her and imagine how nicely she could plan to get behind that mantle of dignity—she thought she could succeed even better than Franziska.

When she learned to love Mr. Huntington, she brought his mother before her mental vision as the long-known *ma chère mère*. He is a tall, noble-looking man, with a naturally-dignified bearing—she looked upon him as almost a being of a higher order, and had many a time half wondered that she was not afraid of him. When he talked to her of his mother, she found little difficulty in receiving everything he said, as only a part

of the description of the ideal she had known so long as a whole. He told her he resembled his mother; that he was the youngest of the family, having a niece older than himself. Adding years only added dignity to this new *ma chère mère*, and poor Hettie disliked to meet her very much—she told me she doubted not her ultimately feeling at ease in the dreaded presence, provided she were not annihilated by the first glance. When her mother-in-law should find what a useful little woman she could be, she was sure she would unbend to her; but the first meeting—the more she thought of it, the more she wished to delay it. It seemed very natural that Henry should love his mother so well, without any of the undue reverence she felt, because she thought him so superior to others. She knew she could not do justice to herself should she make her first appearance among her new relatives as an expected bride—she thought she could do better were she to wait till she could form a slight acquaintance by corresponding.

In consequence of Hettie's concealed cogitations, they went to C——, where she introduced her husband with no more pride than he would have felt in presenting her to his mother. After their return, Hettie received a brief note from her mother-in-law, which was carefully worded, for old Mrs. Huntington was not sure of the reception her epistle might meet at the hands of her city-bred daughter.

In early October, Mr. Huntington found that he could leave his business for a week or two, and he gladly availed himself of the opportunity to visit his friends. Hettie saw how delighted he was at the prospect, and

she tried to feel as elated herself. She was not now anxious to delay the visit; because she wished to know and love those so dear to her husband. She examined her wardrobe most critically to select the dresses which would be most suitable. She consulted me on the occasion, and showed her opinion of my advice by leaving every dress I wished her to take at home, except her travelling-dress. I wished her to dress showily; she did not forget that there would be little opportunity for display in country farm-houses.

Their first day's ride was in the cars, and was very like other days spent travelling thus, stupid and tiresome. The next morning proved unpleasant—it did not rain, but the clouds portended it.

Mr. Huntington said they would remain where they were that day, if Hettie wished, but she saw very plainly that the nearer he was to his early home, the more impatient he became to be there; and she urged their going on, even if it must be, as he assured her, in an awkward, uncovered stage, over a very rough road.

Even from this unpromising day's ride, Hettie extracts mirthful recollections. There was but one passenger in the stage besides themselves—he was a clownish, unrefined fellow, who gave her new ideas of humanity. She was listening, with amusement, to an account he was giving the driver of a visit he made “his woman,” when she was a “gal,” when he was suddenly interrupted by Jehu's leaving his side most unceremoniously. The king-bolt had broken, leaving the forward wheels totally unconnected with the remainder of the wagon. The burly driver went headlong over the front of the box,

hallooing to his horses to stop; but they dragged him on to the foot of the hill. Hettie looked frightened as they were thus left in the middle of the road, till she saw the driver shaking himself at the side of his quiet horses—then she laughed heartily at the ludicrous scene.

The rustic was so efficient a helper in this emergency, that very soon all was made safe again, and they travelled on. He did not finish his story, as probably he did not think of it till he reached his home, which was near the place of the accident.

During the afternoon, there was a constant, light, drizzling rain, not rendering it necessary to keep an umbrella spread, since that was so difficult a task amid the tumblings of their clumsy vehicle, but they rode gayly on over hills which Hettie would have called mountains had they been anywhere else. She thinks she never enjoyed any other kisses quite so well as those she stole when the driver was wholly engaged with his horses, going down those long hills—they were kisses accompanied by such pleasant shower-baths from Henry's saturated whiskers.

When the stage stopped for the night, both were weary, though Henry would not acknowledge it.

“To-morrow night we shall see mother!” he exclaimed, as he entered the cosy little room he had secured for them. Hettie was too much fatigued then to tell him how much she dreaded the time.

The next morning the weather was fair and the coach full, but Henry was too impatient to be very willing to stop at all the little post-offices. After dinner he suc-

ceeded in obtaining a horse and carriage for the remainder of their journey. The roads did not seem so rough then—Hettie was not impatient to reach her destination; her husband sat beside her, looking so noble, so good—he talked to her so pleasantly of the old times, when he knew the occupants of every house they should pass that afternoon, he seemed so much more boyish himself than he had ever done before, that she thought it would be very pleasant to ride thus through life.

Just at sunset they were passing a most beautiful scene—the road was a little ascending, but it did not seem a common, unromantic road—there was a grove of beautiful trees on each side—the ground all about was thickly strewn with the bright-coloured leaves, and there was such a softened light over all, it was enchanting. They stopped as Henry said,

“This was our half-way spot when going to school; many a time have I rested with my brother on that old rock.”

“Might *we* sit there together now?” whispered Hettie, as though she feared a loud word might break the enchantment; *she* need not have feared.

Quietly they walked to the old rock—how much each lived while they sat there! Did they not love each other better, now that the sweet spot was so bright with associations in the memory of each? When riding again, Henry talked more of those old school-mates, and Hettie was so happy to listen.

Darkness began to steal on as they rode up to a large farm-house, and Henry exclaimed,

“*This is home!*”



Hettie's heart beat almost audibly, she thought. The girl who answered his inquiries said, his father and mother were four miles further on, at his youngest sister's.

"More riding, that is all," said Hettie, and was quiet. Some time elapsed before a manly arm stole round her, and Henry asked what she was thinking. Then she told him all her foolish fancies—all her dread of meeting *ma chère mère*—her fear that she should not behave quite properly—her wonder whether she should be most like Fanny, Maria, or Ebbe. Before she finished the moon rose, and as she looked to her husband's face, she saw an expression of mischief; but he said nothing.

Very soon after, they rode into a large yard; again Hettie's heart beat—how would they receive their unlooked-for guest? Henry exclaimed,

"Take care of your chickens, or I will run over them!"

A good-humoured voice instantly replied, "*You* have come, have you! We killed them for *you*."

Then Hettie was lifted out, she hardly knew how, and immediately some large, soft arms were round her—a motherly or grandmotherly face was looking in hers, and saying,

"This is our Hettie, is it?"

There was a heartiness in this first greeting, which made Hettie feel perfectly at ease. She could only wonder that she had ever thought of this good, kind, motherly-looking old lady as like *ma chère mère*. She was ready to join Henry in laughing at her own foolish



little self, when she saw that same mischievous expression in his face a few moments after.

Supper for the travellers was soon upon the table, not such a supper as Hettie had been accustomed to—the table was loaded with substantial viands. For an instant she thought, Shall I ever be able to entertain them like this at our home? Then she forgot all care for the future credit of her housekeeping, and enjoyed the evening very much. Was it wonderful she did, with such happy, pleasant companions? There was her husband, looking so satisfied, so proud, and appearing so interested in everything about him. His father, with his honest face and silvery hair, full of anecdotes, which seldom failed to raise a laugh. His mother, seeming so delighted to see her youngest son again and welcome his little wife, whom she had learned to love from his descriptions. His sister, so full of matronly cares that all should have every wish promptly gratified, and so glad that her father and mother had happened to be there, that she might thus secure the first visit from her young sister. The brother-in-law evincing sound sense and sturdy good-humour. The children, the younger ones very shy, yet all so unaffectedly glad to see their uncle and his pretty wife. Then there was last, but not least, if we should judge by the amount of attention Henry bestowed on him, old Brock, the house-dog, who had frolicked with him as a child, and now, though grown old and lazy, knew him immediately.

Hettie was hardly conscious of any effort to please her new relatives, yet it required no very deep know-

ledge of human nature, to see that all were as much pleased with her as she was with them.

The next morning she went over the orchard, delighting her companions, the old gentleman and all the youngsters, by the zest with which she entered into the business of the day—apple-picking.

Soon after breakfast all started for the old homestead—Henry was as impatient to be there as his parents were to have him under their own roof. How much Hettie enjoyed the week they remained there! She helped her father at his husking, her mother in the pantry; she went over the orchard and pastures with Henry, listening while he told her the flavours of the apples before tasting them, or of the games he had played in this corner, the berries which used to grow in that field, and of his boyhood's companions, memories of whom were connected with every spot.

Early every afternoon the wagons were at the door, that the old couple and the young might go together to visit other brothers and sisters, or old neighbours. Everywhere old Mrs. Huntington preserved that protecting, motherly air, so grateful to Hettie among strange faces. Everywhere she was the same happy, lively old lady, frequently saying such comical things with so demure a face, that Hettie hardly dared laugh all she wished, till she saw, by the twinkling eye, that she might without giving offence. Hettie was delighted with everything, she was as a pet child to all about her—her wishes were to be consulted first, lest she should be home-sick. Very little danger of that, she thought. It came time to return home all too soon. She left her

relatives with hopes that she should see them at her own home right early, promising to pass a month with her mother-in-law next summer.

They had pleasant weather for their journey home. The next morning after their arrival there, Mr. Huntington brought me the following brief note:—

“DEAR EM.—With no very deep grief, I inform you of my sudden loss of an ideal mother-in-law. If you wish to learn the particulars, I advise you to visit very soon, your loving cousin,  
HETTIE.



### MUSINGS AND MEMORIES.

I AM lonely, I am weary,  
 Would you know the reason why?  
 'Tis not that the day is dreary,  
 Not that clouds o'erhang the sky.  
 No. The April sun is beaming  
 Warm and genial as 'twere May,  
 Earth and air in beauty teeming  
 Woo my spirit to the gay.

This new home is very cheerful,  
 Husband, children—all are here;  
 Yet my eyes are sometimes tearful,  
 Tearful for old memories dear.  
 By my window I am sitting,  
 Gazing out upon the street;  
 Thousands to and fro are flitting,  
 No familiar glance I meet.

**Ah!** I miss the birds and flowers  
 Of the home I've left behind—  
 Miss the hill-tops and the bowers,  
 Miss the odour-wafting wind.  
**This** is not the same old carpet  
 Upon which we danced at night,  
**These** are not the time-worn curtains  
 Which shut out the summer light.

All is changed, e'en to the table  
 Where I scribbled rhymes of old,  
**That** was cherry, this is marble—  
 Ah! 'tis marble, hard and cold.  
**This** soft seat of yielding cushion,  
 This is not my worn old chair  
**Where** I rocked my babes to slumber  
 With a mother's patient care.

But I will not sigh in sadness,  
 Will not let my heart grow cold,  
**Soon** twill throb again with gladness,  
 Soon these new things will be old.  
**Kind** and genial hearts are hovering  
 O'er life's pathway everywhere;  
**They** will come and render sacred  
 Carpet, curtain, table, chair.

**Flowers** of love will spring in beauty  
 To my fancy on the street,  
**If** the dusty paths are trodden  
 Daily by familiar feet.  
**If** I scatter seeds of kindness,  
 Here and there as best I may,  
**Roses**, fragrant as the old ones,  
 Soon will cheer the lonely way.

Home so loved—old friends so treasured—  
 Half my heart I'll give to you ;  
 Half, I'll keep in good condition,  
 Warm and lighted for the new.  
 I may drop a tear of sorrow  
 For the past—the far away,  
 While I'm pilfering from to-morrow  
 Smiles and sunshines for to-day.



### FILIAL PIETY.

[A LADY friend says, that the following, from Mrs. Swisshelm's "Letters to Country Girls," ought to be handsomely printed, framed, and hung up in the chamber of every young woman in the land.]

"What—another lecture!" Yes, girls, another lecture. I thought long ago that I should have to read to you a long one about minding your mothers. Of course you all know the divine command, "Honour thy father and thy mother," but very few obey it. An undutiful child is an odious character, yet few young people feel the affection for, and show the respect and obedience to their parents that are becoming, right, and beautiful. Did you ever sit and think about the anguish your mother endured to give you being? Did you ever recount the days and nights of care, toil, and anxiety you cost her? Did you ever try to measure the love that sustained your infancy and guided your youth? Did you ever think about how much more you owe your mother than you will be able to pay? If so, did you look sour

and cross when she asked you to do anything—did you ever vex, ever disobey her? If you did, it is a sin of no common magnitude, and a shame which should make your cheek burn every time you think of it. It is a sin that will be sure to bring its reward in this world. I never knew an undutiful daughter make a happy wife and mother. The feeling that enables any one to be unkind to a mother, will make her who indulges it wretched for life. If you should lose your mother, you can little dream how the memory of every unkind look, or undutiful word, every neglect of her wishes, will haunt you. I could never tell you how I sometimes feel in remembering instances of neglect to my mother; and yet, thanks to her care, I had the name of being a good child. She told me, shortly before she died, that I had never vexed her by any act of disobedience; and I would not resign the memory of her approbation for the plaudits of a world, even though I knew it was her love that hid the faults and magnified all that was good. I know how many things I might have done to add to her happiness and repay her care that I did not do; but the grave has cut off all opportunities of rectifying mistakes or atoning for neglects. Never, never lay past for yourself the memory of an unkindness to or neglect of your mother. If she is sick, how can you possibly get tired waiting upon her? How can you trust any one else to take your place about her? No one could have filled her place to your peevish infancy and troublesome childhood. When she is in her usual health, remember she is not so young and active as you are. Wait upon her. If she wants her knitting, bring it to her, not because

she could not get it herself, but to show that you are thinking about her, and love to do something for her. Learn to comb her hair for her sometimes. It will make you love to be near her. Bring her a drink, fix her cap, pin on her 'kerchief, bring her shoes, get her gloves, or do some other little thing for her. No matter how active and healthy she may be, or how much she may love to work, she will love to have you do any little thing that will show you are thinking of her. How I should love now to get down on the floor and put the stockings and shoes on mother's dear, fat, white feet, or to stand half an hour combing and toying with her soft, brown hair! Girls, you do not know the value of your mother, if you have not lost her. Nobody loves you, nobody ever will love you as she does. Do not be ungrateful for that love, do not repay it with coldness, or a curse of coldness will rest upon you, which you can never shake off. Unloved and unloving you will live and die, if you do not love and honour your father and mother.

One thing: never call either "old man" or "old woman." It is quite a habit in the country for young people to name their parents thus. This is rude, impudent, and undutiful. Any aged person is an old man or an old woman. There should be something sacred, something peculiar in the word that designates parents. The tone of voice in which they are addressed should be affectionate and respectful. A short, surly answer from a child to a parent falls very harshly on the ear of any person who has any idea of filial duty. Be sure, girls, that you each win for yourselves the name of a dutiful daughter. It is so easy to win, that no one



should be without it. It is much easier to be a good daughter than a good wife or mother. There are no conflicting interests between parent and child as between husband and wife. A child's duties are much more easily performed than a parent's; so that she who is a good daughter may fail to be a good wife or mother; but she who fails in this first most simple relation, need never hope to fill another well. Be sure, then, that you are a good daughter. It is the best preparation for every other station, and will be its own reward. The secret you dare not tell your mother is a dangerous secret; and one that will be likely to bring you sorrow. The hours you spend with her will not bring you regret, and you should never feel disappointed or out of humour for not being permitted to go to some place to which you wished to go. You should love her so well that it would not be felt a punishment to give up the gayest party to remain with her. Nothing is more beautiful than to see a girl take off her things and sit smilingly down with mother because she wishes it. But this letter is growing long, and my thoughts have wandered; so good-night. Go and kiss mother as you used to do when a child, and never grow too large or wise to be a child at her side.

## GODFATHER VIVIAN.

It was early in a July afternoon when the carriage set me down at Peekwood, whither I had gone to spend the holidays. I walked quickly up the old lane of roses and sweetbriar, thinking all the way of Jenny and Robert, and of the delightful days we should pass together. It was such a long time since we had parted last—or, at least, it seemed so. I was somewhat disappointed when, instead of Jenny's pretty, laughing face appearing at the door, I beheld the two prim forms of her step-aunts.

Miss Lucretia and Miss Penelope welcomed me, but not cordially—that they never did.

“Where's Jenny?” said I, giving a half-pressure to the cold fingers which received me.

“Jenny is with Robert, at present,” replied Miss Lucretia, stiffly.

“And Robert is in disgrace,” subjoined Miss Penelope, austerely.

A cloud, dark and lowering, overshadowed the promised sunshine of the delightful holidays. I stood irresolute—half wishing, half fearing to ask if I might go to them. Miss Lucretia anticipated me.

“You will find your companions in the south room. I will send up your trunk immediately.”

I scarcely waited to hear the second announcement. I was already at the foot of the stairs. Up I flew, two steps at a time, all red, and dusty, and full of love. I found them together in the south room. Robert, sitting

silently by the window, and Jenny, upon her knees beside him. Oh! what a glad shout he gave when he saw me, and how Jenny cried and laughed alternately! For a time, disgrace was forgotten, and it seemed just as if old times on the sea-beach had returned again. But gradually the settled sorrow stole back over Robert's face.

"What is it all about?" asked I, as we three sat together; and they told me from beginning to end. In a moment of great temptation, Robert had taken that which was not his own. He had stolen—he was a thief! Never shall I forget the world of anguish that passed over his countenance as he said these words—such a bitter, regretful anguish.

"And have you told *all* the circumstances to your aunts?" I again inquired.

"No," replied Robert, proudly; "they would neither understand nor believe me if I did."

"Perhaps they might forgive you."

"Never! They have sent up this morning for godfather Vivian. I don't know what will be done with me."

I had heard of godfather Vivian before, but none of us three had ever seen him. He had lived abroad until during the last year, and, though he had sometimes made short visits to Peekwood, it always happened that he came when Jenny and Robert were absent from home. This announcement of his coming silenced us momentarily. We were all thinking of him.

"I know," said Robert, mournfully, after a pause, "I know that he is hard-hearted and unfeeling, or else

they never would have sent for him. I expect to have no mercy shown me."

"I am afraid you're right, Robert," said I, sadly, and with tears in my eyes.

"I can foresee everything," exclaimed Jenny, passionately, while she held her brother's hand. "I can see him before me just as if I had known him all my life. Tall, grim, hard, unfeeling, stern, implacable, and unforgiving. That's godfather Vivian."

It was a faithful picture to us, and we took it home. We decided that he was a very ogre, and that Robert was to prepare for the worst and most speedy of punishments.

Two hours passed away. We sat sorrowful and without hope. Suddenly, Jenny, who had been watching the window intently, sprang back, clasping her hands, and crying out,

"He's coming! he's coming! The carriage is just coming up the avenue. Oh! Robert! Robert!"

She threw herself upon the floor, and hid her face upon Robert's knee.

He sank back in his chair, his brave handsome face looking white and ghostly, with the black curls clinging around it. I gained the window, and looked hastily out. A plain, brown travelling carriage was winding slowly up to the portico. Yes; godfather Vivian had come. Poor Robert! it was all over with him.

Minutes passed away—they seemed hours to us—and then there was a noise at our chamber door. It opened, and admitted the two step-aunts—Miss Lucretia and Miss Penelope. They looked rigid, austere, and boding ill.

They beckoned solemnly to Robert. He arose, and walked between them. There was no fear expressed in his face, but he looked worn and wretched. Jenny and I followed; and thus, in awful state, we proceeded to the tribunal.

The door of the old library stood open, as if awaiting our entrance. As we passed in, Robert's head sank lower upon his breast, while Jenny and I walked with downcast eyes. We felt that we were in the dreaded presence, and we did not wish to behold it.

There was a breathless pause. Then a round, mellow, beautiful voice, full of sweetness, broke the silence.

"How's this? Robert, my boy, what's the matter?"

I thought that, all at once, a tide of blossoms, and fragrance, and sunshine, had burst into the grim old library. Robert lifted his head and downcast eyes. So did Jenny, and so did I. In the centre of the apartment, on the old-fashioned hair lounge, sat godfather Vivian. No tall, grim, unfeeling guardian. No stern, implacable, unforgiving ogre. But a hale, healthy personage, in the prime of life, with a beautiful, benign countenance, and tender, peaceful, blue eyes.

A single streak of sunlight, which was playing on the wall, glanced now and then across his grayish-brown hair, and white, unwrinkled brow.

Robert stood before him, his hair tossed aside from his face, which now wore a reassured, grateful look. The step-aunts seated themselves, upright and gloomy, one on either side.

"Mr. Vivian," said Miss Lueretia, by way of preface, "a circumstance like this has never happened in *my*

family. I consider my sister's memory disgraced by this unpardonable action which her stepson has committed."

"Mr. Vivian," concluded Miss Penelope, "a Marchmont never would have perpetrated an act so unworthy of his ancestors."

"Go on, Robert," said the mellow voice, mildly. "Tell me all—tell everything."

"Yes, yes, go on," repeated Miss Lucretia, with acrimony. "Be explicit, and don't lie."

Robert's face flushed, his dark eyes glanced passionately, and he bit his lips as if to suppress his just anger. Then he became subdued again and sorrowful.

"Godfather Vivian," he began, but broke down at these words. Then he rallied, and went on, remorsefully, but bravely.

"For sometime past, in going to my place of employ, I have been in the habit of dropping in to visit a poor family, who live in that vicinity. The family consist of a drunken father, a mother, and a crippled child. While I had a little money to spare, besides what I invested, and what I spent in pastime, I gave it to the poor woman for the sake of her child.

"For a week past, the child has lain very ill—almost at the point of death. During her sufferings, her constant desire has been for fruit—for oranges, which delicacy her mother was unable to buy with her scanty means. Yesterday, while I stood at the bedside, her pleadings were heart-rending, and I almost cried because I could not give them to her. I had spent foolishly the



little pocket-money I had, and there was no more to be procured until the next month.

“All the way to my employer’s I thought about it, and half the day it haunted me. In the afternoon I entered the counting-room for some article. The apartment was empty, no one was near, and upon the desk lay a few bright silver pieces. Temptation was before me. I thought of the sick-bed of the little child, with its parched lips and piteous cry. I forgot what I had come for, and yet lingered in the room. If I took the money, I could easily replace it again. Only one month, and then I would replace it all, perhaps more than I took. Then something whispered to me, ‘Oh! Robert, don’t steal,’ and I started at my own thoughts. I tried to say my prayers, but I had forgotten them. I glanced involuntarily at the money, and said ‘Our Father,’ but it wouldn’t do.”

Here Robert broke down again, and covered his face with his hands. Somebody sobbed. It wasn’t Robert, nor Miss Lucretia, nor her sister. It wasn’t Jenny, either, although she was weeping silently. It was godfather Vivian. His face was covered with his white handkerchief, and his breast heaved with emotion.

Robert continued, shading his eyes with his hand.

“I left the counting-room, not as I had entered it a few moments before. There was a great weight on my heart, and I felt no longer fearless and honest, but trembled at a sound. I hurried away from thought, and the place of my temptation. I bought the oranges, and carried them to the sick-bedside. The mother gave me a blessing, but it sounded more like a curse. I never,



never could be upright and honest again : I was so sunk in my own esteem. Oh! sir, I have suffered just here," placing his hand upon his breast, "more than words can tell. It seems as if I had passed through years of punishment and horror. The money has been replaced by my aunts, and Heaven knows my torture has been severe."

Robert ceased speaking, and stood with bowed head, the perfect picture of youthful despair. He asked for no clemency, and he need not have asked for it.

Godfather Vivian removed the handkerchief from his face.

"Mr. Vivian," said Miss Lucretia, leaning forward, "he deserves all and everything. Let him not escape."

"Mr. Vivian, be severe," said Miss Penelope, eyeing him closely.

Godfather Vivian arose from his seat, calmly and with mild dignity. He spoke clearly and distinctly—

"Judge not, lest ye be judged also."

The step-aunts exchanged glances. He continued. He spoke eloquently and long. He made an appeal to the stony hearts before him, and they melted at his touch. He asked them if for one offence he should crush for ever the hopes and springtime of youth. If he should trample upon repentance, and toss lightly away a soul, noble and brave, but erring.

There was pathos in his tones—a great depth and tenderness. Oh! how great and good he looked, standing there, with love and pity and tears in his eyes! He finished his appeal—he turned—he held out his arms.

"Robert, my boy, cheer up! There's a long life

before you. Be honest, be strong, be hopeful. Never despair, and never throw away life because of a single false step."

Miss Lucretia and Miss Penelope sat with downcast eyes, struggling to regain their ancient pride. I buried my head in the window-curtain, and cried heartily.

When I looked up, Robert was in godfather Vivian's arms, and sobbing upon his brave, broad breast. Jenny was there, too, with her hands clasped about his neck, and her bright hair waving down around him.

And the tide of blossoms, and fragrance, and sunshine kept swelling and gliding into the grim library, keeping pace with the round, murmuring, mellow voice. Noble, generous, brave-hearted godfather Vivian!



#### THE STORY OF THE BROKEN FLOWER-POT.

[PISISTRATUS, the young hero, pushed his mother's favourite flower-pot out of the window, in mischief, and told the truth about it.] From that time I first date the hour when I felt that I loved my father, and knew that he loved me; from that time, too, he began to *converse* with me. He would no longer, if he met me in the garden, pass by with a smile and nod; he would stop, put his book in his pocket, and though his talk was often above my comprehension, still, somehow, I felt happier and better, and less of an infant, when I thought over it, and tried to puzzle out the meaning; for he had

a way of suggesting, not teaching; putting things into my head, and then leaving them to work out their own problems. Not long after this, Mr. Squills made me a present far exceeding in value those usually bestowed on children; it was a beautiful, large domino-box in cut ivory, painted and gilt. This domino-box was my delight. I was never weary of playing at dominoes with Mrs. Primmins, and I slept with the box under my pillow.

"Ah," said my father, one day, when he found me ranging the ivory parallelograms in the parlour, "ah, you like that better than all your playthings, eh?"

"Oh, yes, papa."

"You would be very sorry if your mamma was to throw that box out of the window and break it, for fun?"

I looked beseechingly at my father, and made no answer.

"But, perhaps, you would be very glad," he resumed, "if, suddenly, one of those good fairies you read of could change the domino-box into a beautiful geranium, in a beautiful blue-and-white flower-pot, and that you could have all the pleasure of putting it on your mamma's window-sill?"

"Indeed I would!" said I, half crying.

"My dear boy, I believe you; but good wishes don't mend bad actions; good actions mend bad actions."

So saying, he shut the door, and went out. I cannot tell you how puzzled I was to make out what my father meant by his aphorism; but I know that I played at dominoes no more that day. The next morning, my

father found me seated by myself under a tree in the garden; he paused, and looked at me with his grave, bright eyes, very steadily.

“My boy,” said he, “I am going to walk to —— (a town about two miles off), will you come? and, by-the-bye, fetch your domino-box; I should like to show it to a person there.”

I ran in for the box, and, not a little proud of walking with my father upon the high-road, we set out.

“Papa,” said I, by the way, “there are no fairies, now.”

“What then, my child?”

“Why, how then can my domino-box be changed into a geranium and a blue-and-white flower-pot?”

“My dear,” said my father, leaning his hand on my shoulder, “everybody, who is in earnest to be good, carries two fairies about with him; one here,” and he touched my heart, “and one here,” and he touched my forehead.

“I don’t understand, papa.”

“I can wait till you do, Pisistratus. What a name!”

My father stopped at a nursery-gardener’s, and, after looking over the flowers, paused before a large double geranium.

“Ah, this is finer than that which your mamma was so fond of. What is the cost, sir?”

“Only 7s. 6d.,” said the gardener.

My father buttoned up his pocket. “I can’t afford it to-day,” said he, gently, and we walked out. On entering the town, we stopped again, at a china warehouse.

“Have you a flower-pot like that I bought some months ago? Ah, here is one marked 3s. 6d. Yes, that is the price. Well, when your mamma’s birth-day comes again, we must buy her another. That is some months to wait. And we can wait, Master Sisty. For truth, that blooms all the year round, is better than a poor geranium; and a word that is never broken is better than a piece of delf.”

My head, which had drooped before, rose again, but the rush of joy at my heart almost stifled me.

“I have called to pay your little bill,” said my father, entering the shop of one of those fancy stationers, common in country towns, and who sell all kinds of pretty toys and nicknacks; “and, by the way,” he added, as the smiling shopman looked over his books for the entry, “I think my little boy, here, can show you a much handsomer specimen of French workmanship than that work-box which you enticed Mrs. Caxton into raffling for, last winter. Show your domino-box, my dear.”

I produced my treasure, and the shopman was liberal in his commendations.

“It is always well, my boy, to know what a thing is worth, in case one wishes to part with it. If my young gentleman gets tired of his plaything, what will you give him for it?”

“Why, sir,” said the shopman, “I fear we could not afford to give more than eighteen shillings for it, unless the young gentleman took some of these pretty things in exchange.”

“Eighteen shillings!” said my father. “You would

give *that*? Well, my boy, whenever you do grow tired of your box, you have my leave to sell it."

My father paid his bill, and went out. I lingered behind, a few moments, and joined him at the end of the street.

"Papa! papa!" I cried, clapping my hands, "we can buy the geranium—we can buy the flower-pot;" and I pulled a handful of silver from my pockets.

"Did I not say right?" said my father, passing his handkerchief over his eyes; "you have found the two fairies!"

Oh, how proud, how overjoyed I was, when, after placing vase and flower on the window-sill, I plucked my mother by the gown, and made her follow me to the spot.

"It is his doing and his money!" said my father; "good actions have mended the bad."

"What!" cried my mother, when she had learned all, "and your poor domino-box that you were so fond of! We will go back, to-morrow, and buy it back, if it costs us double."

"Shall we buy it back, Pisisstratus?" asked my father.

"Oh, no, no, no! it would spoil all!" I cried, burying my face on my father's breast.

"My wife," said my father, solemnly, "this is my first lesson to our child, the sanctity and the happiness of self-sacrifice; undo not what it should teach to his dying day."

And this is the history of the broken flower-pot.



## IS WORK DEGRADING ?

MAY I claim your attention again, young friends, to a subject which is often very erroneously considered by persons of your age? I have referred to it in my letters and little sketches; it is based on the golden rule of "Do as you would be done by," and it is for the consideration of the girl in the embroidered muslin as much as for her in the calico dress and check apron.

*Is service degrading?* By *service* is meant any kind of aid or assistance which can be rendered to those around us. Is it *vulgar* to be usefully employed? Is it menial to take care of your own room, to aid in keeping the house neat, even to go into the kitchen to cook, if necessary, or to iron, or to clear-starch your own muslins, when you get old enough for such things? *I* think not. *I* call the *pride* which disdains such things *vulgar*, and the indolence which fears the effort contemptible.

I do not think it of much advantage to the intellect to engage in such occupations, but it is a healthful recreation *after* study; it has its own beneficial effect in conquering self-indulgence, and in exercising the faculties of observation and judgment. It makes people considerate, thoughtful, careful, which are womanly attributes; it encourages neatness and order, which are lady-like. It promotes good-will and kindly feelings, and answers and strengthens loving impulses. It is a moral and physical influence for good.

I have a friend, who has not the means of hiring a



servant; she does everything for her household that can contribute to their health, or comfort, or happiness. Her house is neat, her table well supplied, her children properly cared for; and when evening comes, and she sits by her little work-table, repairing the wardrobes of the family, while her husband reads aloud to her some well-written book, I will dare say her appreciation of it is equal to that of the most refined and elegant lady you can name. Indeed, the healthy tone of her mind, its strong, clear sense, its quickness and freshness, lend a zest to the pleasure which I fear the languid lady can never know.

When such service is not needed, it is no sin not to give it. But the less you do for others or yourself, the less you are inclined to do. It is so much easier to ask a servant for a glass of water, or to get you a book; it is so much easier, ay, and more *lady-like*, you think, I know, to ring a bell for a servant to bring your guest refreshments, or to assist her in removing her things. "It is a servant's place to do such things; it is ungraceful, and *fussy*, and vulgar to do them yourself," you say. *I* think the most graceful thing in the world is the yielding of such service to one you love or respect. *I* think the lady who *degrades* herself by such service has a very thin covering of ladyhood over an innately vulgar nature. She is afraid to stoop, lest this vulgarity be exposed. If she is too much of a lady to take care of her own room, if necessary, she is sufficiently vulgar to be willing to be surrounded by slovenliness.

"The windows might be so dirty that I could not see

through them, and I would never wash them," said a young girl, one day.

"My dear"—I thought she would not brook my saying it to her—"your dirty windows are vulgar, not your friend who desires to make them bright and clean."

Which is the lady—she who sits by an untidy hearth all day, or she who brushes or wipes it clean before she will sit by it? She who carefully dusts her room, or she who puts on a dress which has left "*carelessness*" written upon the half-wiped chair or bedstead, where it hung?

"Politeness is to do and say  
The kindest thing in the kindest way."

Which is the lady—she who calls up the weary maid-of-all-work from the kitchen to wait upon her, or she who goes into the kitchen, and assists the tired girl at the ironing-table?

I want to tell you of two circumstances, which come to my memory, to assist you in your decision.

I knew two young ladies, cousins, in the South. Their family was highly respectable, well connected, but impoverished. Ann was visiting at her uncle's. They could keep but two servants, who had all their time occupied by necessary household labour. The weather was such as belongs to July. Fannie went down to the ironing-room one day in every week, and spent most of this day over Ann's ruffles, white muslin dress, and innumerable skirts. They were equally well educated, and in the evening they were equally well dressed, and well looking; but Fannie, whose active, energetic nature

was quickened by her healthful exercise—whose heart was glowing with true womanly life and love—was the charm of the group in the drawing-room. Fresh, vivid, sparkling, her clear, just ideas of life were charming, her piquancy most captivating. Was she less a lady than the gentle, languidly graceful Annie ?

Once I had the happiness of spending an evening in a singularly interesting family. The mother was a lady of noble foreign birth. She had been brought up at a court, educated with the king's nieces, married a man of equally noble family ; her oldest child was born heir to a princely estate, and was cradled in princely luxury. But adversity came. The husband fell into disgrace ; the estate was confiscated ; he fled to save his life, and the lady and her little one fled with him.

When I knew them the husband was again in Europe, and Madame —— sustained herself and her now three children in a happy competency, by teaching. I met at her house—for she was recognised in the highest circles of the city as a lady—some of the most elegant and cultivated persons I have ever known. We had most excellent music of the harp, piano, and violin ; all the family excelled as musicians.

Madame —— had collected a choice library of five hundred volumes in the various modern languages, in all of which she was skilled.

She conversed charmingly, and her daughters were becoming her rivals in accomplishments and graces.

There were two servants employed about the household, but none appeared in the drawing-room that evening, except once. When refreshments were to be served,

they deposited two trays on a side-table, and from them Heinrich, Nina, and Angelique supplied the company. They brought on smaller trays the dainty cups of chocolate, the delicate cakes, and bonbons. A Southern lady, to whom this appeared strange, remarked it to another. Madame —— heard this almost involuntary remark.

“It is a custom which I find to be peculiar to my own country, but it pleases me to retain it here. When we wished to show honour to a guest in our own chateau, my father, my husband, or myself,—for I was an only child,—served him with the wine-cup, and suffered no menial to do anything for him. My children allow the servants to do as little as possible for myself, and they reciprocate all kindly offices amongst each other.”

I knew this family for several years. The eldest girl—she who had opened her eyes to this world under a silken canopy, and whose apparellings had been the richest laces and embroideries—she whom servants without number had vied with each other in serving—was now the little housekeeper. Every morning she went to market, she transacted for her mother all her out-door business, kept her books of accounts, attended to the comfort of the boarding pupils, and to the family wardrobe.

In the course of a few years, Madame ——'s health failed. Her girls kept up the school as well as they could, but the strictest economy became necessary. One servant was dismissed, and Angelique and Nina took her place about the house. Angelique, the elder, became the milliner and dressmaker for the others. They were

young, but they taught, worked, laboured for their mother, each other, and their young brother.

They have become noble women in such a sense as mere accidents of birth or circumstance could never enable them. They are ladies in every sense of this word. What says the little miss whose white hands never touched a broom or a duster, whose delicate shoes were never soiled on a wet pavement, who is vainly ignorant of all kitchen details, who could not make up a fire, or brush up a hearth, or remove finger-marks from a door, or burnish the brass, or clear-starch her muslins? Which is the lady, she or Angelique?



### THE CHILDREN OF THE LORD.

LITTLE Franz was the son of a Swiss cowherd; and in his belted blouse and wooden sandals, with an iron-pointed stick in his hand, small as he was, he wandered by his father's side, as he herded his cows on the summer-pasture of Mount Flegere. Franz dearly loved the cows; he knew all of their characters; they were to him as dear friends to be lovingly tended, and their milky odour was to him a delicious perfume, and the pure, rich, mountain milk seemed always to him like a heavenly gift. But Franz had other pleasures beside the cows: he dearly loved his father, and he would sit for hours on the lofty mountain side, listening to him, as he talked of the magnificent scenery that piled itself in massive

grandeur before them. It was truly beautiful. Mount Flegere shuts in on the north the lovely valley of Chamouni, which looks like a little Eden, nestling itself at the foot of Mont Blanc. Now Franz, as a Swiss boy, had a wonderful pride in this lofty mountain; his father told him that it was the highest point in Europe. So the child ever thought that it was nearest to Heaven; and oftentimes would he sit in the summer evening watching the sunlight fade upon the hills; first the dark shadow crept over the green and flowery valley, with its winding stream and clustering white houses, and then the shadow would creep up the dark and gloomy *Mont-au-vert*, looking so sombre with its coronal of pines; and then the *Mer-de-glace*, that frozen sea, would grow black, and the wonderful *glacier de Boisson*, with its piled ice, looking like a frozen river that had rushed from the cloud-capped hills, and had been congealed in wild, mad waves. For eighteen long leagues did this grand glacier wind its way back among those solitary mountain wilds; and it filled the little Franz with awe, thus to watch the darkness creeping up, and up, even till the lofty "Needles," with their tapering, heaven-kissing spires, looked like mighty black giants, holding watch and weird over the lowly valley. But he loved so dearly the rosy glory that lingered long around the snow-covered peak of the great mountain—when all else was shrouded in darkness, the sunlight gleamed in a wondrous beauty on these glistening heights; and our little Franz thought that angels must live on just such hills in the celestial Heaven, and he never turned his eyes from the lingering glory till it had melted to purple, and then.



he would, with a serene and holy love in his heart, seek his mother in her mountain home.

The father of Franz, though a cowherd, was not a vulgar man, he had the native grace that marks those mountain peasants; and, when a boy, had lived in the family of the good Oberlin, and had brought back with him to his mountain home many beautiful thoughts, many sublime truths; of all these he talked to the little Franz, and thus his thoughts were elevated ever above the earth. Franz could look at nothing that did not make him think of Heaven. And when the short, warm, bright summer was gone, and the herdsman had driven his cows into the valley below, and there left them in the comfortable winter stalls of their rich owner, ah! then Franz had pleasant hours, when the wintry winds howled in their mad fury, and the drifting snow almost buried the peasant's cottage. Then it was bright and warm and pleasant in the long evenings, when the Alpine pine cast such a cheerful blaze of light into every nook and corner of that small room; and the good mother sat plying her distaff, spinning the wool for the warm winter garment, and the kind father, in the bright firelight, carved those pretty Swiss toys that adorn the shops of Geneva, those little tiny cottages that you have often seen even in America. It is one of the delights of the gentle little Franz, to arrange those carved houses into a city—a "heavenly Jerusalem" he called it—and then to people it in his own fancy; he had fathers and mothers and Franzes in every house; they were the angels of God to him; and thus he made himself happy with beautiful fancies.



Franz had never had a child to play with; he had seen children in the valley, and he longed, oftentimes, to play with them, but he was timid, and was little accustomed to the usual ways of children, so that he had never spoken to a child. Hence the *children* in his "heavenly Jerusalem" were peculiarly dear to him.

But winter, too, has its bright days on the Alps, when the sky is blue and cloudless, and the sunlight glitters from mountain side to mountain side, in dazzling brilliancy, and clothes the earth with a jewelled robe of crystalline beauty. It was such a day as this when Franz thought he would make a winter excursion; it was the first time in his life that he had gone alone on the mountain, when its summer paths were all covered over; for he was only eight years old. But the father had gone to the valley to make purchases, and the mother was using the bright sunshine to do housework, and Franz, left to himself, drew on his hooded sheepskin coat, took his staff in his hand, and followed with eager step the track of a chamois in the snow. The keen mountain air braced his active little limbs, and on and on he went, till a sensation of hunger made him think of his home and his dinner. But, alas! vain was this thought, for Franz knew not where he was, the mountain was strange to him, he recognised nothing, he knew not which way to turn. Alone on the wild and desolate mountain, cold and hungry, poor Franz was very sad; and now, to his terror, the wind began its shrill whistle around the icy crags. The little warmth that the bright sun gave was dissipated by the cold, cold winds. Franz wandered about hopelessly, every moment

his feet and hands grew more numb ; he could no longer hold his little staff, and finally crouched down in despair, beside a sheltering rock. He knew that he must keep himself awake, or the death-sleep would come. But, hungry and tired and frozen, the child yielded to the lethargy. Yet, as it was coming on, Franz thought he would say his prayers ; but his frozen brain could only recall the words, with which his dear mother always parted from him :—

“ Trust God,  
Dear child ;  
God, the Lord,  
Sees and knows  
Everything.”

And thus Franz slept. But it was a beautiful sleep, for in a moment a glorious summer sun shone around him, so warm and bright, that it seemed an infinite comfort to him ; and he was lying on a green, soft bank ; it was as if he had just ceased uttering his little prayer, and yet how wonderful it was—he looked down on a city, not the village of Chamouni, but a city as of finely carved Swiss cottages, ranged in beautiful order on a green and sunny slope high on the smiling mountain side. On one side were rich pasture fields, and cows, so large, and mild, and beautiful, were feeding there ; on the other side of the fair city lay another green field, and still waters were flowing through it, and the whitest lambs were browsing on soft grass and starry-looking flowers, and a wondrous light lay over it all. Franz rubbed his eyes, and looked again—it was a *living pic-*

ture of what he had so often seen in his own mind. But what was his joy to see children, real, beautiful children, walking out of those pretty houses—boys and girls, in Swiss dresses. And their blue eyes, and clear mountain complexions, and flowing yellow curls, were prettier far than any that Franz had ever seen. The children greeted each other with a glad joy, and then formed into groups; and some went into the pastures and ran about in perfect delight, gathering the rich clover flowers, with which to feed the cows. Some were making garlands, with which they decked the lambs that sported with them; others climbed the mountain side, and plucked the luscious grapes that hung from white trellises. Franz was charmed—it was such a vision of beauty to his delighted eyes. So many children he had never before seen. Presently a little girl stood before him; she was so bright and gentle that Franz could only think she was an angel of God; for round her shone a soft, luminous light, and her white dress was more pure and glistening than the snows of the mountain, and the wreath of flowers that crowned her bright curls and shining face were blue as a cloudless sky; but the rosy light in her cheek seemed all at once to change them into roses, for the warm blood rushed into her fair cheek as she said, “Wilt thou come and play?” Franz thought how would his shaggy coat and wooden shoes look in that company. But then again he saw that he too was dressed in beautiful garments, and the little girl held a wreath in one hand, which she smilingly placed on his head; then she kissed him and said, “Thou art very beautiful;” and her love filled the heart

of Franz with an inexpressible happiness. Yes, now he had a child to play with, the yearning anguish of his heart was satisfied, and he followed the dear little one as she bounded before him, looking back so bright and happy. And then she stopped in a grassy spot, where a clear spring bubbled up, and two silver-leaved olive trees interlaced their branches above it, and birds sang in the trees, and the purple grapes hung from the twining vines that clasped their curling tendrils round the trees, clothing them in a rich and wondrous drapery of beauty. The little child bid Franz be seated, and said to him, "Wilt thou drink?" And she took a crystal cup and dipped it into the sparkling waters. Never did an earthly king drink from such a jewelled cup. And the waters were like life to him. And the little one said, "These are the waters of truth that our Lord gives us." And Franz said to her, "Whose child art thou?" And she answered, "I am the Lord's child." And she said, "Thou hast drank of the waters of truth, wilt thou not now eat of the bread of life?" And she held before him a plate of gold, and fine bread was on it. The hungry Franz ate with a boundless delight. Then she plucked purple grapes, and said, "Eat! for this is the fruit of good works." And she laughingly said, "I think our Lord has let me perform a very good work this happy day, for thou art hungry and thirsty, and He has sent me to fill thy mouth with good things." And the heart of Franz must have beamed out of his eyes, for his heart was filled with good things too. Then the angel-child said, "Shall we not go into the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem?" And she led Franz down

the mountain side. But what a wonderful city was this when he came near to it! Afar off he had thought it a city of Swiss cottages, but when he came near he found that "the building of the wall of it was jasper, and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass; and the twelve gates were twelve pearls, every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it." And wonderful it was for Franz, as he walked there in all this magnificence and beauty, to look up and see, as it were, Mont Blanc, towering in a holy grandeur, but bright with an exceeding great glory. The angel said, "That is the hill of the Lord, great and high, and light ever flows from the Divine Sun upon it, and *its* rosy glory never fades." Franz saw happy children coming in from the green fields, and singing, as they went, holy songs of love to the Lord, and love to each other. And he turned to his companion and said, "Whose are these children?" and she, smiling, said, "*All, all* are the Lord's children; and thou, too, art the child of the Lord!" And the blessedness of our little Franz was like a *perfect* love; when all at once the shadow of a great darkness fell upon him; he could no longer see the angel-child; for a moment he heard her voice, then he was deaf to that; the glorious city was shut out from him; he felt the most dreadful sensations—a mighty agony—the pain of suffocation—a terrible contraction; and poor Franz opened his eyes in his own peasant home. Oh, he could not bear it—the heaven-life was gone. But Franz heard his mother's

deep sobs, and then he had a great pity for the earth-sorrow, and he opened his eyes and said, "Mother!" And the good mother now wept for joy. Oh, how she had mourned her little Franz; what agonies she had suffered at his loss; and how she and the father had searched until they had found the frozen boy; and how they had striven to bring back life into those stiff limbs. Franz listened to it all, but weary tears were in his eyes. All that he could say was, "Ah, mother, I was so happy! why did you bring me back here?" But the mother could not understand him; and it was many days before Franz was strong enough to tell what he had seen in the death-sleep, when his outer body was partially separated from his spirit, and he had come into his spiritual consciousness. The mother and the father listened with awe; the child had seen angels; he had talked with them—eaten and drank with them; had actually walked in the streets of the heavenly New Jerusalem; yea, had been an angel himself for a few blissful moments. Then said the loving mother, "Ah, Franz, had I known thy joys I would not have wished thee back." And the pale sickly boy turned his large blue beaming eyes upon her and said, "It is well, dear mother; I thank the dear God that He let me come back to tell you how happy I was. When I go again, thou wilt not mourn, dear mother." And the mother saw that her little Franz would very soon go again to the beautiful city. But she wiped the tears from her eyes, and was glad in the joys that awaited her only little one. She no more called him hers; he was the "Lord's child," and she loved him with a most holy love, and tended him gently, for pining



sickness had come upon the little mountain boy. And when the early spring came, they dug a grave on the mountain side, and the dust of his body crumbled to its mother earth in sight of the *great* mountain. And while the mother loved to linger round the green mound, and the father drove his cattle to feed on that sunny slope, that he might sit beside the grave of his little one, yet they never mourned; it was to them a joy and blessedness that Franz had gone to the great and beautiful city, to sport there for ever with "The Children of the *Lord*."



#### GIRLS' HEADS AGAINST VEST PATTERNS.

"TICKLED TO DEATH—Boys when they arrive at age, and girls when they first lay their heads against a vest pattern."

As we never were a boy, we cannot attempt to speak of the sensations one would experience at any age, but we are somewhat curious about that other matter. Can any girl remember how she felt when she first laid her head "against a vest pattern?"

How old is she, usually, at that particular and important time? Can you inform us? We had always before supposed that little girls had papas who loved and caressed them, and that their heads were laid against vest patterns a thousand times before they could talk. We are certain they have a right to that place for their heads while their fathers live; and where there is a pro-



per state of feeling existing between the parties they will often be laid there.

Mr. Smith, is that tall and elegant daughter of yours in the habit of it? Have you become so accustomed to it from her childhood, that you do not go home at night from the business of the day with one-half the pleasure, when you know she is out of town, or visiting her cousins? It is your own fault, if it is otherwise. Your little girl, of eight or ten, watches the hour for your coming, and stands with longing heart and wistful eyes; how she would love to bound into your arms, and lay her head there. But your brow is knit, and *your* head is full of bank stock and merchandise; you do not even notice her, and she glides away with a quivering lip, and an aching void within. Father, how can you thus defraud your daughter? You think of her sometimes with affection, when your business is not *very pressing!* Occasionally, once a year, perhaps, you bring home a present for her, and she thanks you, and gives the required kiss very respectfully and timidly. At some of these times it may, perhaps, strike you that she is *cold*. Alas! you yourself, with your chilling indifference, have frozen over the gushing fountain that would else have fertilized your heart with its overflowing freshness; you have dimmed the brightness of that jewel, whose sparkling rays would have enlightened and vivified your life; you have crushed the tender flower, whose fragrance would have penetrated to, and gladdened your very soul. Ah, father! how can you thus have defrauded yourself?

There is often too little manifestation of affection in

the family circle. This is something peculiarly necessary to the happiness of girls; if they do not receive it at home, they will be tempted to accept it elsewhere, and you may some fine day find your daughter's head laid against the vest pattern of one whom you would be far from choosing as her companion for life.

George, or Henry, you really love that pretty sister of yours, and are often proud of her when in company together. Why do you, when at home, assume an indifference in your manner to her, amounting almost to contempt? or notice, only to tease her? Think you, by this, to establish your superiority? Would it be derogatory to your incipient manhood to caress and speak kindly to one who loves you devotedly, and who would repay you a thousand-fold for every attention you might bestow? You live in the same house; sit at the same table—*brother and sister*. Yet are you companions—I had almost said friends, even? You have your own affairs, which you do not condescend to communicate to her, unless it is in a general, boastful kind of a way, to illustrate the above-mentioned superiority, and you will not listen, if she attempts to enlist your sympathy in any of hers.

Suppose you try the experiment, for once. On coming home, to-morrow, seat yourself by her side, with the remark that you have something to tell her.

She may, perhaps, be startled, and think you are at some of your old tricks; but let her see you are in earnest. Relate a pleasant scene, or ask her advice about something, and before you have done, *if you tell your story well*, you can have your arm around her waist, and

her head against your vest pattern. It will do *yourself*, as well as her, more good than you can well imagine. You will feel that you have a treasure, a source of delight unthought of before.

From that time consult with her frequently upon your plans and projects. You will find her faithful, sensible, and quick to arrive at a correct conclusion; grateful for your confidence, and ready to do anything in her power to assist you. I once knew a brother who said to his sister, in a half-sportive way,

"You are very pretty—prettier than any of the girls I see around, and I believe I will court you"—as the term was then used—"for my wife."

"Very well," said she, in the same strain; "come on, and see if you can get me."

From that time he redoubled his attentions to her; and what was the result? Why, the interchange of kindly acts, and the never speaking to each other except in words of affection, strengthened and increased their attachment for each other to a remarkable degree, and they remained through life connected by the strongest and purest ties of friendship. So true it is, that where love is expressed, that love will increase, and where it is repressed or neglected, it will diminish and die.

Fathers! Brothers! The salutary influence of those heads, beautiful in their rich and glossy ringlets, often laid against your vest patterns, against *your hearts*, will be felt by you in the counting-room, in the street, and in the public assembly, inciting you to good, and turning away your feet from the path to ruin.

## FAITHFUL LOVE—A FAMILY PICTURE.

THE scene is a domestic one ; the season, winter ; the time, night. Supper is cleared away, and the infant, held in pa's arm during the performance of that necessary duty, has been restored to her mother, to nestle, and smile, and sleep.

John and Charlotte, the elder two, have drawn pictures on their slates ; Alfred and Robert have romped and tussled upon the floor, by turns, shouting with laughter, or crying over short-lived hurts ; pa himself has settled with his green glasses to read a late number of *Brother Bird's Medium*, while Uncle Frank, weary with the bodily labours of the day, is half asleep in the corner, though with his eyes fixed upon *Burns's Poems*, and making a half-pretence of reading it.

All at once a simultaneous shout arises from the juvenile group ; there is a throwing down of slates, with a bang, upon the table, and a rush for the possession of pa's knee. The shout is, "Pa, tell us some stories !" And it is clear from the general look of assurance and the happy little faces, both that this is a very common practice at this time of night, and that the practice is a highly pleasing one, if not to pa himself, at least to his little pets.

A squabble for the knee results, as usual, in favour of the youngest, by name Robert, by nature coarse and piratical ; and the other three content themselves with leaning full weight upon the shoulders and limbs of the

beleaguered parent, weights that would crush an ox, but do not discompose a father, who rather looks as though he could hold four or five more.

“And now who shall hear the first story?”

“Sister—begin with her!”

“Well, what shall it be about?”

“A sailor,” says John.

“A little girl,” says sis.

“A *panther*,” says Alf.

“A monkey,” says Robert.

“A little girl it shall be, and so all of you listen with all your might.

“Once there was a little girl, about eight years old, named Mary. And there was a lady who was very kind to Mary, and made clothes for her and mended them when torn, and washed them when they needed it. And this lady never seemed tired of taking care of Mary. For when she was only a little baby the lady nursed her. When she was old enough to walk, the lady taught her to walk. She taught her to say her letters, and to read, and afterwards to write—to sew and to knit.

“She gave her a little garden and rose-bushes and flower-seeds to plant in it, and a little hoe to kill the weeds. She taught her how to sing hymns, and night and morning to kneel down at her side to pray God for His blessings. As soon as she got big enough she sent her to school. She paid a great deal of money to the schoolmaster every session, and bought her a great many books.

“Now how do you think this little girl should have treated that kind, good lady?”

"She ought to do what she told her," says John.

"She ought to love her mighty good," says sis.

"I'd whip her if she wasn't," says Alf.

"Never cry a bit," says Rob.

"Well, now, strange as it may sound to you, that little girl didn't always do what the kind lady told her, and she wasn't always good. Sometimes she was very naughty, sometimes she would tell stories, sometimes quarrel with others.

"Then this good, kind lady, instead of sending the bad girl off, would correct her for being naughty, and pray God to make her better: and then so soon as the little girl was sorry and would try to be good, the lady would kiss her and love her as well as ever. Now, wasn't that lady a most charming good lady?"

"Just as good as could be," says John.

"The goodest ever I heard of," says sis.

"I'd a whipped her harder," muttered Alf.

By this time Rob had gone to sleep, and, of course, said nothing.

"At last this little girl was taken sick, oh, very sick indeed. She had the fever, and was as sick as she could be. Being sick made her very cross and bad. She would scream aloud at the least noise. She would refuse to take medicine, until they had to pour it down her throat. She lost her senses, and did not know anybody.

"But the good kind lady, never got tired of watching over her, and taking care of her. For more than seven nights she never went to bed, but sat by the side of the sick little girl, from sunset to sunrise. She never got



angry with her once. She would take her out of bed, and hold her in her arms. She mixed her medicines. She prayed to God a thousand times that the dear little girl might get well. Oh, she was a dear, good lady, don't you think so?"

"But did she get well?" asked the three.

"No; poor little Mary died. After all the kind lady's care, after all her trouble, and watching, and everything, she died. They put her into a coffin and buried her. All the other folks soon forgot that there ever had been such a little girl as Mary. But the dear, good lady never forgot it. No, she never forgot little Mary. She kept all her clothes and her little doll. And she cried and mourned whenever she remembered little Mary. She was never happy again after Mary died. And when she died, which was about five years afterwards, she said she hoped she should find little Mary in Heaven. They buried that kind, good lady by little Mary's side. Now, John, what do you think made that lady love Mary so well, and take so much care of her, and be sorry for her death?"

John does not know. He thinks she was a most excellent good woman, but 'tis very strange she should think so long about Mary<sup>1</sup> after she was dead.

"And what say you, Alf?"

Alf thinks Mary must have had a heap of money or something! Or else he don't know why the lady should care so much for her.

"And what says little sis to it?"

The little girl has a big tear in each eye; and there is a track down each cheek, where a number of them



have chased each other. She glances towards her mother, whose eye meets hers, as if there was a mutual intelligence between them, only understood by the female sex. Then looking boldly up in the father's face, with the air of one who could solve the difficulty with ease, she answered,

“'Twas her ma! the dear, good lady was her ma!”  
And sure enough little pussy guessed it.

---

#### THE WAY MY MITHER DID IT.

I STEPPED into the dining-room the other day, and found my nice Scotch help arranging the delf (as she calls it) on the shelves of the cupboard, in a very fanciful manner. The plates all turned upon their edges against the back, and the saucers bottom up, with each a cup upright, and a spoon inside.

“Why, Ann,” I exclaimed, “don't do so; I don't like it.”

“It's the way my mither did it, in the old country, ma'am, and I think it's so pretty,” she replied, with an earnest appealing look, and the tears almost starting from her eyes.

“And my mother taught me to put them up as they were arranged before,” said I. “I think you had better replace them.”

“Just as ye likes,” was her answer, in a subdued and rather disappointed tone—“just as ye likes. Every-

body likes the ways of a mither, I'm thinking; and be sure you should have your own way in your own house." And she began to return them to their places with all possible despatch.

I saw she looked hurt. Old memories were welling up in her heart—old memories of days gone by, when in her native land, in the simple cottage beside the "bonnie Byrae," she had made the most of her "mither's" scanty table furniture.

She was thinking of the days of her childhood—the merry days among the heather and the blue-bells, upon the brae. Of Robin, who came over the moor, and sat by the "ingleside," of a winter evening; of the father, who played the bagpipes, and the mother, the good, loving mother, that,

"Wi' her needle and her shears,  
Gars auld clothes look amaist as weel as new."

And all unconsciously, perchance, had her hands piled up the delf, in fantastic rows. And I had bade her stop. Already I was sorry for the order, so deep and holy a feeling, to my mind, is the love and reverence for a mother.

"Never mind, Ann," said I; "never mind; put them up to suit yourself, to-day, and another time I will have them my way."

"Will I, then?" said she, turning to me, with a face burning with smiles and thankfulness, while her eyes were almost swimming in tears. "Will I, then? All the day long, as I go there, I'll be thinking of my mither, and I'll work all the better for ye, for thinking

of her. For she taught me many a lesson to be true for those I wrought for. It's but a small thing to be sure, but it does my heart good, now and then, to be following her ways. For, somehow, I think that she never taught me a wrong thing."

I turned away. There were old memories tugging at my heart-strings, too, awakened by this simple incident, which had taught me, in one moment, more of the deep, earnest nature of the girl, than months of the common round of daily duty. Who that has had a mother, gentle and kind, that does not love, now and then, "to be following her ways?"

Had I sneered at those ways, and touched rudely and roughly that vibrating chord of affection, would Ann have loved me, and gone on with a cheerful, willing heart with my work? Would her step have been light, and her song plaintive, yet cheerful, through all the day—if I had crushed those upspringing memories of a joyous time, by forbidding her this innocent display of individualism?

Much is written, and much more talked, of the worthlessness of hired girls. And how shall we remedy evils? is the question everywhere echoing in our ears. Much, too, is written and talked, of the tyranny and harshness of employers.

There is wrong on both sides. There are many very worthless girls, heartless and unfaithful. Many mistresses of the same stamp. But there are those who are strong, and brave, and true; who, though circumstances compel them to fill a subordinate position, have hearts and minds that would grace any station in life.

Who shall measure the value of kindness to them? The sympathetic word in their lonely condition; the smile of encouragement; the yielding, now and then, to that earnest feeling of spontaneity, that asks an utterance in every true soul. A word, a look, may bind them to us, and make them fast friends in our hour of need. Ay, lift them up—take their feet from the miry “slough of despond,” and place them upon the rock of patience and forbearance, and send them onward and upward in the way of duty. A word, and a look, too, may utterly discourage them, by tearing away the delicate tendrils of hope and trust, which have been clinging and reaching upward for a higher and better life. And they will fall prostrate, trailing all that is beautiful in their natures among the noxious weeds at their feet, with no hand to lift them up, no heart to sympathize with their earnest longing, or to support their feeble efforts.

They are lost. Lost to themselves, to goodness, and to God, but not to the world around them. For while they grovel, so surely will they drag others down to a level with themselves, and society in generations to come, may feel through its members the wrong done by a word unfitly spoken:

No single class of persons hold the comfort of families so much in their own hands, as that called “servant girls.” If the *help* in the kitchen is out of tune, there is little harmony in the household. A little patient kindness may make all sunshine; a little petulance, haughtiness, pride or contempt, may make all storm and darkness.

Strive encouragingly to cultivate the good and root

out the evil. Respect their rights as you would have your own respected, remembering that no rights are so sacred, as the right to our own thoughts, our loves, and our own sweet memories, shrined away in our holy of holies—the heart, where no stranger can enter rudely, or with the sneer of contempt, and not raise within us antagonism, disgust, or dislike. Their sweet and pleasant memories are as dear to them as the cherished of our own—and which, if roughly scoffed aside, simple though they may be, cause them to feel that we are enemies, and not friends—spies upon their inner life, and they will be very apt to treat us accordingly. Oh! there are *rights* higher and holier than those appertaining to dollars and cents. There is a justice which is not weighed by pounds and ounces, or measured by hours or minutes. Thousands may be just, so far as contract goes, living up truly to its very article, yet each and every one be unjust to the true life, unjust to all the better feelings of the soul.

---

## DEATHS OF LITTLE CHILDREN.

A GRECIAN philosopher being asked why he wept for the death of his son, since the sorrow was in vain, replied, “I weep on that account.” And his answer became his wisdom. It is only for sophists to contend that we, whose eyes contain the fountains of tears, need never give way to them. It would be unwise not to do so on some occasions. Sorrow unlocks them in her

balmy moods. The first bursts may be bitter and overwhelming; but the soil on which they pour would be worse without them. They refresh the fever of the soul—the dry misery which parches the countenance into furrows, and renders us liable to our most terrible “flesh quakes.”

There are sorrows, it is true, so great that to give them some of the ordinary vents, is to run a hazard of being overthrown. These we must rather strengthen ourselves to resist, or bow quietly and dryly down, in order to let them pass over us, as the traveller does the wind of the desert. But where we feel that tears would relieve us, it is false philosophy to deny ourselves at least that first refreshment; and it is always false consolation to tell people that because they cannot help a thing, they are not to mind it. The true way is to let them grapple with the unavoidable sorrow, and try to win it into gentleness by a reasonable yielding. There are griefs so gentle in their very nature, that it would be worse than false heroism to refuse them a tear. Of this kind are the deaths of infants. Particular circumstances may render it more or less advisable to indulge in grief for the loss of a little child; but, in general, parents should be no more advised to repress their first tears on such an occasion, than to repress their smiles towards a child surviving, or to indulge in any other sympathy. It is an appeal to the same gentle tenderness: and such appeals are never made in vain. The end of them is an acquittal from the harsher bonds of affliction—from the tying down of the spirit to one melancholy idea.



It is the nature of tears of this kind, however strongly they may gush forth, to run into quiet waters at last. We cannot easily, for the whole course of our lives, think with pain of any good and kind person whom we have lost. It is the divine nature of their qualities to conquer pain and death itself: to turn the memory of them into pleasure; to survive with a placid aspect in our imaginations. We are writing at this moment just opposite a spot which contains the grave of one inexpressibly dear to us. We see from our window the trees about it, and the church spire. The green fields lie around. The clouds are travelling overhead, alternately taking away the sunshine, and restoring it. The vernal winds, piping of the flowery summer-time, are nevertheless calling to mind the far distant and dangerous ocean, which the heart that lies in that grave had many reasons to think of. And yet the sight of this spot does not give us pain. So far from it, it is the existence of that grave which doubles every charm of the spot; which links the pleasures of our childhood and manhood together; which puts a hushing tenderness in the winds, and a patient joy upon the landscape; which seems to unite heaven and earth, mortality and immortality, the grass of the tomb and the grass of the green field: and gives a more maternal aspect to the whole kindness of nature. It does not hinder gayety itself. Happiness was what its tenant, through all her troubles, would have diffused. To diffuse happiness, and to enjoy it, is not only carrying on her wishes, but realizing her hopes; and gayety, freed from its only pollutions, malignity and want of sympathy, is but a child playing about the knees of its mother.



The remembered innocence and endearments of a child stand us in stead of virtues that have died older. Children have not exercised the voluntary offices of friendship; they have not chosen to be kind and good to us, nor stood by us from conscious will in the hour of adversity. But they have shared their pleasures and pains with us as well as they could; the interchange of good offices between us has of necessity been less mingled with the troubles of the world; the sorrow arising from their death is the only one which we can associate with their memories. These are happy thoughts that cannot die. Our loss may always render them pensive; but they will not always be painful. It is a part of the benignity of Nature that pain does not survive like pleasure, at any time, much less where the cause of it is an innocent one. The smile will remain reflected by memory; as the moon reflects the light upon us when the sun has gone into heaven.

When writers like ourselves quarrel with earthly pain (we mean writers of the same intentions, without implying, of course, anything about abilities or otherwise), they are misunderstood, if they are supposed to quarrel with pains of every sort. This would be idle and effeminate. They do not pretend, indeed, that humanity might not wish, if it could, to be entirely free from pain: for it endeavours, at all times, to turn pain into pleasure, or at least to set off the one with the other, to make the former a zest, and the latter a refreshment. The most unaffected dignity of suffering does this, and if wise acknowledges it. The greatest benevolence towards others, the most unselfish relish of their pleasures, even at its

own expense, does but look to increasing the general stock of happiness, though content, if it could, to have its identity swallowed up in that splendid contemplation. We are far from meaning that this is to be called selfishness. We are far, indeed, from thinking so, or of so confounding words. But neither is it to be called pain when most unselfish, if disinterestedness be truly understood. The pain that is in it softens into pleasure, as the darker hue of the rainbow melts into the brighter. Yet even if a harsher line is to be drawn between the pain and pleasure of the most unselfish mind (and ill health, for instance, may draw it), we should not quarrel with it if it contributed to the general mass of comfort, and were of a nature which general kindliness could not avoid. Made as we are, there are certain pains, without which it would be difficult to conceive certain great and overbalancing pleasures. We may conceive it possible for beings to be made entirely happy; but in our composition something of pain seems to be a necessary ingredient, in order that the materials may turn to as fine account as possible, though our clay, in the course of ages and experience, may be refined more and more. We may get rid of the worst earth, though not of earth itself.

Now the liability to the loss of children—or rather what renders us sensible of it, the occasional loss itself—seems to be one of these necessary bitters thrown into the cup of humanity. We do not mean that every one must lose one of his children in order to enjoy the rest; or that every individual loss afflicts us in the same proportion. We allude to the deaths of infants in general.

These might be as few as we could render them. But if none at all ever took place, we should regard every little child as a man or woman secured; and it will easily be conceived what a world of endearing cares and hopes this security would endanger. The very idea of infancy would lose its continuity with us. Girls and boys would be future men and women, not present children. They would have attained their full growth in our imaginations, and might as well have been men and women at once. On the other hand, those who have lost an infant are never, as it were, without an infant child. They are the only persons who, in one sense, retain it always, and they furnish their neighbours with the same idea. The other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality. This one alone is rendered an immortal child. Death has arrested it with his kindly harshness, and blessed it into an eternal image of youth and innocence.

Of such as these are the pleasantest shapes that visit our fancy and hopes. They are the ever-smiling emblems of joy; the prettiest pages that wait upon imagination. Lastly, "Of these are the kingdom of heaven." Wherever there is a province of that benevolent and all-accessible empire, whether on earth or elsewhere, such are the gentle spirits that must inhabit it. To such simplicity, or the resemblance of it, must they come. Such must be the ready confidence of their hearts, and creativeness of their fancy. And so ignorant must they be of the "knowledge of good and evil," losing their discernment of that self-created trouble, by enjoying the garden before them, and not being ashamed of what is kindly and innocent.

## A HOME FOR MY MOTHER.

THE following interesting narrative of one of those real struggles of the young to assist their parents, which sparkle like diamonds along the pathway of life, is taken from a paper published in Wisconsin.

Being called, says the narrator, on business to the United States "Land Office," and, while there, awaiting the completion of my business, a lad, apparently about sixteen or seventeen years old, came in, and presented to the receiver a certificate of purchase for forty acres of land. I was struck with the countenance and general appearance of the lad, and inquired of him for whom he was purchasing the land.

"For myself, sir," the reply was.

I then inquired where he got the money.

"I earned it by my labour," he answered.

"Then," said I, "you richly deserve the land."

I then inquired, "Where did you come from?"

"New York," said he.

Feeling an increased desire to know something more of this lad, I asked him whether he had parents, and where they lived; on this question he took a seat and gave me the following narrative:—

"I am from New York State—have there living a father, mother, and five brothers and sisters. I am the oldest child. Father is a drinking man, and often would return home from his day's work drunk, and not

a cent in his pocket to buy food for the family, having spent all his day's earnings in liquor with his drinking companions ; the family had to depend chiefly on mother and myself for bread ; this distressed mother much, and had a powerful effect on my feelings. Finding that father would not abstain from liquor, I resolved to make an effort in some way to relieve mother, sisters, and brothers from want. After revolving things over in my mind, and consulting with mother, I got all the information I could about the Far West, and started for Wisconsin with three dollars in my pocket. I left home on foot. After spending my three dollars, I worked occasionally a day, and renewed my travel so long as money lasted. By labour occasionally, and the charitable treatment I got on the road, I landed in Wisconsin. Here I got an axe, set to work, and cleared land by the job—earned money, saved it, till I gathered \$50, which money I now pay for the forty acres of land."

"Well, my good lad (for by this time I became much interested in his story), what are you going to do with this land?"

"Why, sir, I will continue to work and earn money, and, when I have spare time, prepare some of my land for culture, raise myself a log house, and, when prepared, will write father and mother, brothers and sisters, to come to Wisconsin and enjoy this home. This land, now bought by me, I design for my mother, which will secure her from want in her declining years."

"What," said I, "will you do with your father, if he continues to drink ardent spirits to excess?"

"Oh, sir, when we get him on the farm he will feel at

home, will work at home, will keep no liquor in the house, and in a short time he will be a sober man."

By this time the receiver handed him his duplicate receipt for his forty acres of land. Rising from his seat on leaving the office, he said, "*At last I have a home for my mother!*"



### A CHILD'S FIRST LETTER.

To write to papa, 'tis an enterprise bold  
 For the fairy-like maiden scarce seven years old;  
 And see! what excitement the purpose hath wrought  
 In eyes that when gravest seem playing at thought.

The light little figure surprised into rest—  
 The smiles that *will* come so demurely repressed—  
 The long-pausing hand on the paper that lies—  
 The sweet puzzled look in the pretty blue eyes.

'Tis a beautiful picture of childhood in calm,  
 One cheek swelling soft o'er the white dimpled palm  
 Sunk deep in its crimson, and just the clear tip  
 Of an ivory tooth on the full under-lip.

How the smooth forehead knits! With her arm round his  
 neck,

It were easier far than on paper to speak;  
 We must loop up those ringlets: their rich falling gold  
 Would blot out the story as fast as 'twas told.

And she meant to have made it in bed, but it seems  
 Sleep melted too soon all her thoughts into dreams;  
 But, hush! by that sudden expansion of brow,  
 Some fairy familiar has whispered it now.



How she labours exactly each letter to sign,  
Goes over the whole at the end of each line,  
And lays down the pen to clap hands with delight,  
When she finds an idea especially bright.

At last the small fingers have crept to an end :  
No statesman his letter 'twixt nations hath penned  
With more sense of its serious importance, and few  
In a spirit so loving, so earnest, and true.

She smiles at that feat so unwonted and grand,  
Draws a very long breath, rubs the cramped little hand :  
May we read it? Oh, yes ; my sweet maiden, maybe  
One day you will write what *one only* must see.

“ But no one must change it ! ” No, truly, it ought  
To keep the fresh bloom on each natural thought.  
Who would shake off the dew to the rose-leaf that clings?—  
Or the delicate dust from the butterfly's wings ?

Is it surely a letter? So bashfully lies  
Uncertainty yet in those beautiful eyes,  
And the parted lips' coral is deepening in glow,  
And the eager flush mounts to the forehead of snow.

'Tis informal and slightly discursive, we fear ;  
Not a line without love, but the love is *sincere*.  
Unchanged, papa said he would have it depart,  
Like a bright leaf dropped out of her innocent heart.

Great news of her garden, her lamb and her bird,  
Of mamma, and of baby's last wonderful word ;  
With an ardent assurance—they neither can play,  
Nor learn, nor be happy, while *he* is away.

Will he like it? Ay, will he! what letter could seem,  
Though an angel indited, so charming to him?



How the fortunate *poem* to honour would rise  
That should never be read by more critical eyes!  
Ah, would for poor rhymesters such favour could be  
As waits, my fair child, on thy letter and thee!

---

## LITTLE MOLLY.

THE air was full of sweetness, the tall spire of the village church had just caught the last rays of the descending sun, crimsoning its glittering vane; while in the distance the forest vista, already in shadow, was lit as by enchantment; innumerable fire-flies were there disporting through their brilliant voluptuous life, with lustre ever burning brighter as darkness deepened. Within the little cottage of Jacob Somers, the table had long been spread for the evening meal; his wife Rachel had displaced and re-arranged, at least a dozen times, the brown loaf, the rich-looking golden cheese, the plate of berries, and the homely milk-jug, seeking thus to wile away the time. She had long ended her household labours, and for an hour and more had been anxiously awaiting the return of her husband. Again she took a seat by the window, and pressing aside the trailing jasmine and wild rose, which afforded so fragrant a shade from the noontide heat, looked eagerly to the hill-side, the path whence he usually returned. Just within sight was the clear lake, so replete with mournful memories, as the blinding tears gathered in her eyes. Jacob, with heavy, listless step, entered the room; he bore the

appearance of one utterly regardless of all things; his eye was dull and cold; yet there was a contraction of the brow that spoke of pain, and it might be bitter grief. Carelessly he threw his coat across a chair-back, as he took a seat by the table. No change of countenance betokened interest or affection, as he replied to Rachel's kind words of inquiry. "Yes, the oxen had been long put up; 'twas hours since he had worked." Then, as if the mere utterance of these few words were painful, he buried his face in his hands, taking no note of the bowl of milk Rachel had pushed towards him. A moment passed; again the hands were withdrawn; while, more from habit than necessity, he commenced eating the bread he had broken into the milk. A large Newfoundland dog had crept to his feet, and now sought to win his attention; if possible to engage him in a game of romps as of old; suddenly Jacob grasped the table like one in a fit, whilst closely, shudderingly, he gazed on the dog. Yes, 'twas plain enough, he held in his teeth a stocking—a child's stocking—the sight revived all his grief; the assumed calmness fled; all stoicism was gone; with each sinew strained, each feature working convulsively, the strong man flung himself on the floor, writhing with anguish.

And where was Molly? the farmer's only child—his little darling—she who had made his home a paradise, by her childish prattle and endearing ways—she who had ever welcomed him with kisses; the hidden pearl, that made a blaze of glory in that lowly cot; the little one, who, with voice so sweet, would question him of Heaven, till he, the father, had learnt of his child,

“Verily of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected Thy praise.”

*Molly had been drowned.* These few terrible words comprised an eternity of agony. Rachel’s memory was no less fond. Her bosom still throbbed with the pressure of that tiny form she had there hushed to sleep but se’nnight a week, yet, woman-like, she suppressed her grief to comfort the heart whose sobs were so despairing. No; she had not forgotten how lifelike looked the little one on her funeral couch—a smile playing round the dimpled mouth; the golden curls resting on the fair cheek; the hands folded over a bunch of violets, fitting emblem of such purity and loveliness—all seemed more sleep than death. Her own hands had arranged the robe worn on her birthday festival, and tied up the sleeves with blossom-coloured bows; and even whilst thus arraying her treasure for the grave—whilst her tears fell fastest—she felt that “God loveth whom He chasteneth,” striving submissively to say, “Not my will, but Thine, O Lord! be done!”

As all these recollections were stirred afresh by her husband’s outburst of sorrow, a shadow seemed to fall from her gaze—her duty plainly revealed was before her, to lead Jacob’s mind from the ghastliness and terror of death, which now oppressed, to the hope of a life eternal which comforted her. Kneeling, she raised her husband’s face, and kissed the embrowned forehead.

“Be comforted, Jacob, and turn from the cold, wan, dripping form which memory alone presents to you now, to the angel in the bosom of God, that Molly has now become.”

Thus, with words of grave tenderness and simple teachings, she strove to lead his mind heavenward—to give another bend to the images fancy presented. Long it was before the farmer could find consolation; long before he could drive away the torturing thought of the loving farewell in the morn, as she climbed his knee and clung to his neck, with the painful contrast which met him on his return at eve—a dripping, lifeless mass, drawn from the lake which had drunk up her young life, as in innocent play on its brink, she had slipped and fallen in. But the loving wife persevered, telling of the free, immortal spirit, that had exchanged earth for the beauty of Heaven; that death was not a dark spectre, but a radiant angel, whose embrace had imparted peace everlasting. An unknown calm descended on the mourners, and, as they knelt in prayer, their spirits recognised the presence, though invisible to outward sense, of the child they had lost. In faith they beheld her in gorgeous white vesture, with star-crowned head, leading them, with tender clasp, upwards, ever upwards.

## FAREWELL TO A SISTER.

Go forth to thine appointed rest,  
    Beyond the broad sea-foam ;  
Go forth, our fairest and our best,  
    To thy far island-home !  
With him, thy youthful heart's approved,  
Thy mate for many a year beloved ;  
    In thy full matron bloom  
Go forth, to act, as fate commands,  
Thy part of life in other lands.

Kind thoughts attend thee, from the place  
    Where thou hast been so long  
A daily sight, a household face,  
    A mate in work and song ;  
A flower to cheer, a lamp to shed  
Soft light beside the sick one's bed :  
    To that beloved throng  
Each act of daily life shall be  
A mute remembrancer of thee.

Full well we know, where'er thy lot,  
    Thou canst not be alone ;  
For Love, in earth's unkindest spot,  
    Will find, or make its own ;  
And from the green and living heart  
New friendships still, like buds, will start :  
    But yet, wherever thrown,  
No ties can cling around thy mind  
So close as those thou leav'st behind.

And oft, while gazing on the sea  
    That girds thy lonely isle,

Shall faithful memory bring to thee  
The home so loved erewhile ;  
Its lightsome rooms, its pleasant bowers,  
The children, that like opening flowers  
Grew up beneath thy smile ;  
The hearts that shared from earliest years  
Thy joys and griefs, thy hopes and fears.

The sister's brow, so blithe of yore,  
With early care imprest ;  
And she, whose failing eyes no more  
Upon her child may rest ;  
And kindred forms, and they who eyed  
Thy beauty with a brother's pride ;  
And friends beloved the best,  
The kind, the joyous, the sincere,  
Shall to thine inward sight appear.

And they, whose dying looks on thee  
In grief and love were cast,—  
The leaves from off our household tree  
Swept by the varying blast,—  
Oft, in the mystery of sleep,  
Shall Love evoke them from the deep  
Of the unfathomed Past,  
And Fancy gather round thy bed  
The spirits of the gentle Dead.

Farewell ! if on this parting day  
Remorseful thoughts invade  
One heart, for blessings cast away.  
And fondness ill repaid ;  
He will not breathe them—let them rest  
Within the stillness of the breast ;  
Be thy remembrance made  
A home where chastening thoughts may dwell ;  
My own true sister, fare thee well !

## HEART-SHADOWS.

It was a cold night—quite cold, the snow fleecing down, and the hail rattling against the windows. The wild storm-king was out with the blast, intent on mirthful mischief. The old clock ticked cheerily, and the fitful shadows waved unsteadily on the wall. The winter was without, but the summer of peace rested in my heart.

I sat in the great arm-chair, in the fire-twilight, alone, and in a revery, half dreaming, as it were, my past life over again. The golden book of Memory lay unclasped before me—every thought, every feeling of by-gone hours traced ineffaceably there. All sorrows, all joys, intermingling and forming link in link, a beautiful chain, without which life would be incomplete. We were friends, Alice and I, early friends and true ones; she was older and far gentler, with mild, loving eyes, and soft, shadowy, dark hair. I was young and thoughtless, and I had treasured up in my heart an idol, one worshipped and adored. I dwelt in a beautiful dream, waking and sleeping, and my guardian spirit was ever Alice. Alas! how rudely was that dream broken! how inexpressibly sad the knowledge that it could never come again; and yet all life is but a dream.

Beautiful in soul was she, and they called her Alice Faye, but to me she was only Alice—darling Alice. We were wandering, two hearts in one, through the beautiful Present, seeking not to unveil the rugged



world of Futurity, and knowing and believing that to the Past were confided all estimable things.

Oh, our Father! Thou who knowest the frailty of all earth's flowers, lend, oh! lend us Thy aid to withstand the frosts of adversity, the chilly, wintry winds that crush the already bruised and broken reed.

How vivid is that memory rising before me now—the memory of our parting! It was a beautiful, radiant day, late in the summer. Alice and I had been in company with some youthful friends, and now, arm-in-arm, were returning through the wood. We bent our steps towards our favourite haunt—a hushed, sweet spot, where the grass grew long and luxuriant, and the wild vine trailed its crimson bloom-flowers, dark, yet bright amid the flowers that begemmed the earth. Our accustomed seat was beside a shelving rock, overhung with the graceful honeysuckle and clambering roses, its rude face half hidden by the beautiful objects clinging around it. The wild locust, laden with its pure blossoms, and the poplar, silver-limbed, threw a pleasant shade over it.

Here, the earth seemed more kind and smiling, and, among all fond memories, this is to me the holiest and best beloved.

We sat silently—Alice's hand clasped fast in mine, and her head leaning down upon my shoulder so confidently, so caressingly. The sunlight was glimmering through the glossy leaves, and the rich snowy blossoms of the locust were dropping softly—softly down around us.

It was then that we first awakened from our happy

dream-life—for the first time ventured to peep into the unknown futurity. I felt that life was, indeed, but a “walking shadow,” and bursting into tears, hid my face amid Alice’s bright tresses.

“Don’t cry, Ruby, darling,” whispered Alice, very softly, calling me by an endearing name of childhood; “don’t cry, it will not be for a long time—not very long.”

Her own voice trembled a little, although she tried hard that it should not.

“Ah, Alice,” said I, sadly, “a dim foreshadowing of the future is twining itself around my spirit—that great future, which is a strange world to us. Perhaps we may never meet in friendship again, Alice; perhaps we may doubt each other’s sincerity.”

“No, no, Ruby, dear Ruby,” replied Alice, winding her arms closer around me, “we’ll never doubt each other. Our dearest hopes are anchored in the great sea of the world; but they will remain steadfast. Oh! we’ll never be estranged, Ruby.”

“Never!” I echoed, and yet, through the mazes of the forest there seemed to float a voice, strangely mournful, repeating that vow of eternal friendship, breathing a warning for our sanguine hopes, a knell for our parting hour.

Alas! how slowly, how sadly have the years passed since then, for doubt and mistrust gliding in, severed that sacred chain where we thought it was the strongest. We met again in after years, but the world—the world had taught us how to crush the wild, wayward throbbings of our hearts. We were living—and yet dead; living

as the breath giveth life; yet dead to all the gentler influences, the holier emotions of that love once so dear to us. And the youthful years that had shadowed us so kindly with their wings, withdrew to weep over the ashes of our former friendship.

\* \* \* \* \*

The fire was gleaming faintly in the chimney, my reverie was over—and yet I felt so sad, so lonely sitting there. I thought I felt a soft touch upon my shoulder—heard a gentle voice whispering a name of other years—Ruby! I was glad some one had said it; it was a sweet remembrance in a time of sorrow. Somebody whispered loving words, somebody knelt beside me and pressed a soft cheek to mine. I returned the pressure—I wept, yet I knew not why. I only remember that Alice was kneeling there beside me, my own Alice, and that we were friends again.

It was so sweet, so strangely sweet, to have her there as of old, the same love-light in those kindly eyes, the same holy beauty resting on that placid brow; I fancied that it was all a dream, and I dared not move, lest the entrancing spell should break.

That joyful meeting is marked for ever with a “morning star” in the heaven of my existence. And now, each budding hope, each undefined fear, give I henceforth to the sacred keeping of our Father, our Protector, and our God.

In the hushed and holy stillness of the night, when the stars and flowers keep watch over earth, and every soul ascends on trembling wings to the throne of Him

above, I fall asleep quietly to dream of the angels and of Alice Faye.

Even so hath He ordained, that we shall give a smile for every new sunbeam born to the earth, a tear for every blossom untimely withered.

For every heart hath a sunlight, every soul a shadow.



### THE DUMB CHILD.

SHE is my only girl:

I asked for her as some most precious thing;  
 For all unfinished was Love's jewelled ring,  
     Till set with this soft pearl;  
 The shade that time brought forth I could not see;  
 How pure, how perfect seemed the gift to me!

Oh, many a soft old tune  
 I used to sing unto that deadened ear,  
 And suffered not the lightest footstep near  
     Lest she might wake too soon;  
 And hushed her brother's laughter while she lay—  
 Ah, needless care! I might have let them play!

'Twas long ere I believed  
 That this one daughter might not speak to me;  
 Waited and watched, God knows how patiently!  
     How willingly deceived:  
 Vain Love was long the untiring nurse of Faith,  
 And tended Hope until it starved to death.

Oh! if she could but hear  
 For one short hour, till I her tongue might teach  
 To call me *mother*, in the broken speech

That thrills the mother's ear!  
 Alas! those sealed lips never may be stirred  
 To the deep music of that lovely word.

My heart it sorely tries  
 To see her kneel, with such a reverent air,  
 Beside her brothers at their evening prayer;  
 Or lift those earnest eyes  
 To watch our lips, as though our words she knew,—  
 Then moves her own, as she were speaking too.

I've watched her looking up  
 To the bright wonder of a sunset sky,  
 With such a depth of meaning in her eye,  
 That I could almost hope  
 The struggling soul *would* burst its binding cords,  
 And the long pent-up thoughts flow forth in words

The song of bird and bee,  
 The chorus of the breezes, streams and groves,  
 All the grand music to which nature moves,  
 Are wasted melody  
 To her; the world of sound a tuneless void;  
 While even *Silence* hath its charm destroyed.

Her face is very fair  
 Her blue eye beautiful; of finest mould  
 The soft white brow, o'er which, in waves of gold,  
 Ripples her shining hair.  
 Alas! this lovely temple closed must be,  
 For He who made it keeps the master-key.

Wills He the mind within  
 Should from earth's Babel-clamour be kept free,  
 E'en that *His* still small voice and step might be  
 Heard at its inner shrine,  
 Through that deep hush of soul, with clearer thrill?  
 Then should I grieve? O murmuring heart, be still!

She seems to have a sense  
 Of quiet gladness in her noiseless play.  
 She hath a pleasant smile, a gentle way,  
     Whose voiceless eloquence  
 Touches all hearts, though I had once the fear  
 That even *her father* would not care for her.

Thank God it is not so!  
 And when his sons are playing merrily,  
 She comes and leans her head upon his knee.  
     Oh! at such times I know—  
 By his full eye and tones subdued and mild—  
 How his heart yearns over his silent child.

Not of *all* gifts bereft,  
 Even now. How could I say she did not speak?  
 What real language lights her eye and cheek,  
     And renders thanks to Him who left  
 Unto her soul yet open avenues  
 For joy to enter, and for love to use.

And God in love doth give  
 To her defect a beauty of its own.  
 And we a deeper tenderness have known  
     Through that for which we grieve.  
 Yet shall the seal be melted from her ear,  
 Yea, and *my* voice shall fill it—but *not here*.

When that new sense is given,  
 What rapture will its first experience be,  
 That never woke to meaner melody  
     Than the rich songs of heaven,—  
 To *hear* the full-toned anthem swelling round,  
 While angels teach the ecstasies of sound!

## A SCENE FROM REAL LIFE.

“My wife feels as though she were labouring very hard for the benefit of others.”

This was spoken by a man who considered himself a good husband; but if he had been one in reality, would his wife have been troubled with such feelings?

Let us consider the subject, and take an occurrence from every-day life, to illustrate it.

Mr. B—— arises in the morning with the intention of going to the city, a distance of twenty miles, and back the same day. In his haste to be gone, he does not observe that his wife is paler than usual. Her health has been poor for a long time, and her altered appearance now is not even noticed. Although they are in comfortable circumstances, yet neither feel able to keep hired help. As the husband loves neatness and order, for which the wife is remarkable, the latter determines that her washing shall be done in his absence. But many things arise to hinder—the wood is poor, and will not burn—the babe requires more care than usual. The sun has passed the meridian, and is hastening on his daily course; but her work is not half done. She toils on with an energy beyond her strength, hoping all will yet be well. She pictures to herself the children, quietly sleeping in their snug little bed, the floor mopped, the fire bright and cheerful, the table spread with its snowy cloth, and her husband's favourite dish prepared, ere his return.



But, alas! bright anticipations vanish; the day is past, and "evening shades appear;" the babe becomes more troublesome, and now takes all the mother's time. She has nearly succeeded in quieting it, when she hears the well-known step on the threshold; her husband enters; he sees the unfinished washing, with all its accompaniments of tubs and pails; the fire is nearly gone out, and his little boy, two years old, is splashing water from one thing to another, in great glee. Mr. B—— seizes the child, and places him in a chair in the corner, with so much violence that the room quickly resounds with his screams. He then whips him to still his cries, that his own voice may be heard. Every blow pierces the mother's heart, but she knows remonstrance is vain, and lets things take their course, in silence.

Her turn comes next, and he can hardly find words strong enough to express his indignation; among many other things, he tells her she never has anything in order; he never knew her to have a fire, or a meal of victuals, in season.

By this time the babe was fairly aroused, and it needed considerable exertion to hush its plaintive cries; but by carrying it about in her arms, the mother was at last triumphant.

She next prepared their evening meal with as much alacrity as exhausted nature would allow; and, as her husband sipped his tea, and enjoyed the genial warmth of the fire, the irritability of *his* temper passed off, and with it all thoughts of the late unhappy occurrence. He soon retired to rest, and in refreshing sleep forgot the toils of the day. His wife had now her washing to

finish, and everything to put in its place, even to her husband's bootjack; for, with all his love of order, he frequently forgets to put up his own things. When she had accomplished all, she, too, retired to rest, but not to sleep—no: every nerve was unstrung; and as she laid her throbbing head on its pillow, and vainly attempted to sleep, the events of the day would crowd themselves into her mind. Yet she would not allow herself to think unkindly of her husband. She tried to reason thus—“Have I not a good husband? Does he not provide for my actual wants, according to the best of his ability?”

But, notwithstanding all her endeavours, the cruel words which had been uttered by him in wrath, would rush into her mind, like unbidden guests, until tears began to flow in profusion, and memory became busy. Then she thought of the happy home of her girlhood, of the mother that watched over her, of the days when the rose of health bloomed on her cheek, and her brow was unclouded by care. But, most of all, her memory reverted to the bridal day, when her lover promised, in presence of God and man, to love, cherish, and protect, until death should them part. She asked herself if she had ever been unfaithful to the marriage vow; conscience answered no; had she not studied her husband's happiness with untiring zeal, until self was all forgotten, health gone, constitution enfeebled? And now, as she felt herself less able to perform the duties required of her, she felt that her love had been ill repaid. Thus, after a day of overtasked labour, and nearly a night spent in tears, the wife sunk into an uneasy slumber, to be dis-

turbed at intervals by her babe, until the dawn of another day, when the well-rested husband called upon his wife to rise, not doubting that she was as much refreshed as himself.

Now, what had that husband gained by all this? Had not his wife done her best, and what could she do more? It is true, he knew not of her grief and tears; he knew not that such treatment was hastening her to the grave; as she daily sunk under the accumulated weight of care, he knew not that the cause was in any way attributable to himself.

Yet it would have required but little forbearance on his part to have spoken a kind word, or sympathized with her a little. She would then have performed the same duties with cheerfulness, and considered herself happy in the possession of such a husband. And when her head rested on its pillow, and she strove to hush its throbbings, no images but such as affection brings would have haunted her imagination; and her slumbers would soon have been as calm as those of the loved ones beside her.

If any man who has a care-worn wife, chance to read this article, let him look well to the subject; and, if he wishes to be met with a smile or look of happiness, let him strive by his own example to sow the good seeds of affection, and he will be sure to reap an abundant harvest, for "virtue is its own reward."

## THE FIRST BABY.

MY old schoolfellow, Mary Thornly, had been married nearly two years when I made my first call on her in her capacity of a mother.

“Did you ever see such a darling?” she exclaimed, tossing the infant up and down in her arms. “There, baby, that’s ma’s old friend, Jane. He knows you already, I declare,” said the delighted parent, as it smiled at a bright ring which I held up to it. “You never saw such a quick child. He follows me with his eyes all about the room. Notice what pretty little feet he has, the darling footsy-tootsies!” and taking both feet in one hand, the mother fondly kissed them.

“It certainly is very pretty,” said I, trying to be polite, though I could not perceive that the infant was more beautiful than a dozen others I had seen. “It has your eyes exactly, Mary.”

“Yes, and da-da’s mouth and chin,” said my friend, apostrophizing the child, “hasn’t it, precious?” And she almost smothered it with kisses.

As I walked slowly homeward, I said to myself, “I wonder if, when I marry, I shall ever be so foolish? Mary used to be a sensible girl.” In a fortnight afterwards I called on my friend again.

“How baby grows!” she said; “don’t you see it? I never knew a child grow so fast. Grandma says it’s the healthiest child she ever knew.”

To me it seemed that the babe had not grown an inch,

and to avoid the contradiction, I changed the theme. But, in a moment, the doting mother was back to her infant again.

"I do believe it's beginning to cut its teeth," she said, putting her finger into the little one's mouth. "Just feel how hard the gum is there. Surely that's a tooth coming through. Grandmother will be here to-day, and I'll ask her if it isn't so."

I laughed, as I replied, "I am entirely ignorant of such matters; but your child really seems a very fine one."

"Oh! yes; everybody says that. Pretty, pretty dear!" And she tossed it up and down, till I thought the child would have been shaken to pieces; but the little creature seemed to like the process very much. "Is it crowing at its mother? It's laughing, is it! Tiny, niny, little dear. What a sweet precious it is!" And she finished by almost devouring it with kisses.

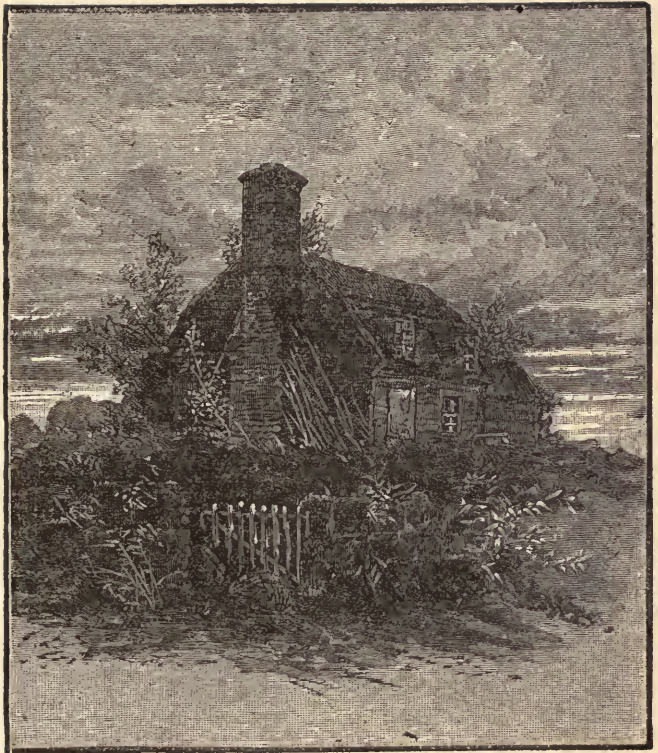
When I next called, the baby was still further advanced.

"Only think," said my friend, when I had made my way to the nursery, where she now kept herself from morning till night, "baby begins to eat. I gave it a piece of meat to-day—a bit of real broiled beefsteak!"

"What!" said I, in my ignorance, for this did look wonderful, "the child eating beefsteak already?"

"Oh," laughed my friend, seeing my mistake, "what a sad dunce you are, Jane! But wait till you have babies of your own. She says you eat beefsteak, darling," added the proud mother, addressing the infant, "when you only suck the juice. You don't want to





THE OLD HOMESTEAD.





choke yourself, do you, baby? Eat a beefsteak! It's funny, baby, isn't it?" And again she laughed—laughing all the more because the child sympathetically crowed in return.

It was not many weeks before the long-expected teeth really appeared.

"Jane, Jane, baby has three teeth!" triumphantly cried the mother, as I entered the nursery. "Three teeth, and he's only nine months old! Did you ever hear of the like?"

I confessed that I had not. The whole thing, in fact, was out of my range of knowledge. I knew all about Dante in the original, and a dozen other fine-lady accomplishments; but nothing about babies teething.

"Just look at the little pearls!" exclaimed my friend, as she opened the child's mouth. "Are they not beautiful? You never saw anything so pretty—confess that you never did. Precious darling," continued the mother, rapturously hugging and kissing the child, "it is worth its weight in gold!"

But the crowning miracle of all was when "baby" began to walk. Its learning to creep had been duly heralded to me. So also had its being able to stand alone; though this meant, I found, standing with the support of a chair. But when it really walked alone, the important fact was announced to me in a note, for my good friend could not wait till I called.

"Stand there," she said to me in an exulting voice. "No, stoop, I mean; how can you be so stupid?" And, as I obeyed, she took her station about a yard off, holding the little one by either arm. "Now, see him," she

cried, as he toddled towards me, and finally succeeded in gaining my arms, though once or twice I fancied he would fall, a contingency from which he was protected, however, by his mother holding her hands on either side of him, an inch or two off. "There, did you ever see anything so extraordinary? He's not a year old, either."

By this time I began to be considerably interested in "baby" myself. He had learned to know me, and would begin to crow whenever I entered the nursery; and I was, therefore, almost as delighted as my friend, when, for the first time, he pronounced my name. "Djane," he said, "Djane!"

His mother almost devoured him with kisses in return for this wonderful triumph of the vocal organs; and when she had finished, I, in turn, smothered him with caresses.

I never after that smiled, even to myself, at the extravagance of my friend's affection for her baby; the little love had twined himself around my own heart-strings. How could I?

And now that I am a mother myself, I feel less inclination still to laugh, as others may do, over that mystery of mysteries—a mother's love for her baby.

## HOME LIGHTS AND HOME SHADOWS.

“WHAT a quiet man Mr. Mason is, and what nice children he has! I never hear any noise when I go there.”

What strange notions people have of nice, quiet people! thought I, as I heard the foregoing observation from a man, whose kindly disposition and cheerful face were a perfect preventive of the quiet, nice order that reigned in Mr. Mason's house. When he came home, the cheerful smile on his lip, the kind inquiry, or some pleasantly related piece of news, set all the lips to smiling, and all the tongues to talking around his table; and the very noise he seemed to have deprecated, was the music to which his life was happily gliding on, of which he himself was the key-note—a perfect contrast to the gloomy order that reigned in the house of the quiet Mr. Mason.

I will give you a short sketch of this gentleman. He was, in the estimation of the world, and his own also, one of the best of men. By careful industry, he had acquired some property, among which was a nice dwelling, wherein his mother, himself, and only sister lived. As his means increased, he furnished it very nicely. His mother was very industrious, and his sister very tasty; and many inventions of their needles gave an air of elegance to what, in other hands, would have appeared plain. In the course of time, the mother died. I forgot to say, that, although Mr. Mason was always spoken of as one of the best of sons and brothers, the family

always appeared uneasy until his opinion of what they may have done was known. When it was asked if he did not disapprove, they inferred it pleased him, for "he was one that never praised." "It will do well enough," was the warmest encomium he ever used. The brother and sister were left together. Poor girl! her mother had been her only companion—her brother had never seemed to care for society. Of a warm, cheerful temper, and with ardent affections, her whole heart now turned to her brother; and he, tender from grief for the loss of his mother, seemed to throw off for awhile that cold quietness, that is more depressing to an affectionate disposition than active unkindness. When he came home, he would tell her of some of the doings of the world in which he mixed, and of which she only knew the exterior. Again the colour came to her cheek, and her buoyant laugh had something like the merry ring it used to have in her mother's lifetime. Occasionally it appeared to startle her brother; but he thought of the many hours she had been alone, and he could not find it in his heart to reprove her.

But soon the old habit of fault-finding returned. Anything that did not exactly suit him, was sure to render him cold and silent; and often a meal passed without anything but monosyllables. If she would try to entertain him with any little incident that came under her observation, "He took no interest in such trifles." Her joyous laugh was repressed with the observation, "That it was too boisterous; the neighbours would hear her." The house was soon quiet enough after that. Alone, without any one to speak to, while her brother was at

his business, you would not have known when he was at home, from any signs of life that were about the house.

I loved Betty Mason, and could not help pitying the orphan girl, for I knew how truly her mother had been "all the world to her;" and I often took my sewing and went in to sit with her. I knew she was devotedly attached to her brother, and therefore did not think it strange she should be so anxious that everything she did should please him. But one thing puzzled me, and that was, that she appeared to be far more cheerful for two or three months after her mother's death, than afterwards. She appeared more depressed, and complained more of her loss, when from the time that had elapsed, she would have become reconciled to it. I soon penetrated the secret, for I found, that in her brother's presence she was not the same impulsive, warm being, but acted with a precision and quietness that was not natural to her character; and, when on the plea that she thought she ought not to be a burden to her brother, she told me she was going to accept a situation in a fine school, I admired the good sense and independence of my friend.

I asked her brother what he thought of Betty's plan. He said he "saw no necessity for her doing anything for a living; but she was her own mistress; she could do what she pleased." My cheeks burned at the cold indifference of this speech. I knew that with one-quarter the physical, and only healthful mental exertion, she was going to obtain a genteel independence. She would be absent from home from Monday till Friday. She left the house in the charge of a good servant, and once a

week gave it a good regulating. She soon recovered the tone of her spirits; and her brother, who really missed her presence, was too glad of her weekly return, to find fault with her now buoyant spirits, for, like most persons of a peevish, fault-finding disposition, he was rather wavering; and her decision of character, now fully developed by intercourse with the world, and a sense of independence, overruled his foolish notions, and compelled him to be happier than he ever was.

But such a girl as Betty Mason was not born to "blush unseen;" and a fine man of congenial character sought and won her. George Edgar it was, who, at the beginning of our story, had just returned from a visit to his quiet brother-in-law's, and was so much admiring the quietness of his household.

After Betty's marriage, Edward Mason had married a gentle, timid girl, and thought he would be very happy; but his querulous disposition, and the habit of irritability at the slightest thing that did not please him; and worse than all, omitting to commend anything, no matter how great an effort had been made by his wife to consult his taste and conform to his wishes, depressed the timid creature by his side into ill-health. His children were sickly, quiet little things, without energy enough for a hearty laugh, or health-giving romp; and he was constantly fretting about doctors' bills and medicine, and telling his friends how much more fortunate they were than he had been with his children; never suspecting that he poisoned the spring of his own happiness at the source.

Why did he not show a cheerful face to his wife, and



warm her heart with a sense of duty fulfilled, instead of grudging the slightest word of praise? Why did he repress the joyous laugh of childhood, and make his house so quiet and dull, that one always felt, on leaving, as if just escaped from a sick chamber?

O, give me the man that will smile a warm, genial, heartfelt smile when I please him, even though he frown when I don't; and keep me far from the one that "will never praise."



## THE WORTH OF A DOLL.

A TRACT has been written on the *worth of a dollar*; but I know not that any one has written upon the first four letters of that word—*doll-ar*. I think much might be said upon it. With your leave, I will say a few words.

Many parents seem to overlook the importance of providing *home amusement*, home instruction, and home employment, for their children. The minds of children are active, and they need something to interest them, amuse, instruct, and employ them.

As soon as my oldest daughter was able to speak, I procured for her a box of blocks, with the letters of the alphabet marked upon them. With these she amused herself, and soon learned the whole alphabet, and also to spell words by selecting and arranging the proper letters.

In like manner, I procured for my son the Infant's Library as soon as he could repeat the letters. First



these thirty-six little books were read to him; very soon he learned to read them himself, and read them over and over again; and I have no doubt they were of as much service to him as the next six months' schooling, though they cost but twenty-five cents.

Last fall I sent for a DOLL for my little daughter. It did not cost a *dollar*; but it was better than I intended to get, and of course cost more. But after she had been in possession of it for some six months, I began to reckon up the worth of it to her, and I was really surprised to find the sum so great.

1. In the first place, it had made her contented at home, and kept her out of the streets; and this was surely worth to her at least . . .	\$25 00
2. It had taught her to sew, cut and fit dresses, and make hats and bonnets, without without calling on her feeble mother for aid, at least . . . . .	25 00
3. It had cultivated a cheerful, contented, and happy disposition, . . . . .	25 00
4. It had furnished self-employment, amusement, and instruction; and so relieved her sick mother from care, . . . . .	25 00
5. It had helped to develop those traits so amiable and lovely in a female, sisterly and motherly affection, and love for domestic duties,	50 00
6. As a motive to diligence in study and attention to other duties, it had been worth at least	50 00
7. Other benefits unthought of, or indescribable, at least . . . . .	100 00
Whole amount, . . . . .	<u>\$300 00</u>

So, in a short time, I found the little *doll* had already been worth more than *three hundred dollars!* Of course I concluded that the few shillings had been profitably expended: and I am led to think that if all parents would furnish their children with some appropriate home amusements and employments, it would be greatly to the advantage of both parents and children. It may not be necessary for all to purchase *dolls*; but if they would expend some few *dollars* in getting good books, papers, and the like for themselves and their children, I have no doubt that in less than a year they would find it a real saving. A little spent in this way might save much needless expense. If it is difficult to estimate the worth of a *doll*, who can tell the value of a good book, or of a useful paper?

Some abhor idolatry who are yet not so much afraid of dollar-worship! For a little child to play with a *doll* is a very harmless kind of *i-dol-a-try*; and though many can tell the value of a dollar, I very much doubt whether any one can estimate, in a family of children, *the worth of a doll!*



## FARMERS' SONS.

WHEN a young man leaves his home in the country for a less desirable one in the city, or elsewhere, the inference, as a general thing, is, either that he is "spoiled" by indulgence on the part of the parents, or, by certain influences which may have fallen upon him,

led to despise labour on a farm, and induced to seek a less laborious and more easy mode of life. That these are not the *only* causes which induce boys to leave a good home and farm, the following sketch may perhaps show.

“I am really very glad to see you, Mrs. Gove, this afternoon. Do you know that it is nearly a whole year since I’ve had this pleasure, and you my nearest neighbour?”

“I did not think it was so long, but—but, I have a great deal of care.”

“Yes, you certainly must have. Let us take our work and sit on the piazza; it is much cooler there, and secluded from the sun.”

“Can we see our meadow from there, Mrs. Norton?”

“Let me see—O, yes, very well.”

“Mr. Gove, with the men and Billy, have gone down to the lower field fencing, and he wished me to have an eye on the meadow, as that fence is all down and our cattle are in the road. I see you have finished planting, Mrs. Norton. You have everything done in season, and yet you never seem hurried, or fretted. You must take comfort.”

“Why, as to that, we feel that there is nothing worth doing, but is worth doing well; and feeling thus, we own but little land, a small farm compared with yours, and we find no difficulty in having our work done at the right time.”

“Yes,—and I can hardly realize, Mrs. Norton, that this is the same place where I played, when a child, ’tis so changed, and so beautifully changed; these handsome



THE FARMER'S BOY.



trees—why in this very spot twenty years ago a sand bank 'twas, in which nothing grew but dock and tansy. I used to get the double tansy for grandmother, to colour her cheese with. I am not surprised that my Billy should say, as he did to-day, that he was never so happy as when he was under the ash-tree down by the spring. Really, Mrs. Norton, that is the only one near our house, and that is fast going to decay. You have vines, trees and shrubs, and beautiful flowers; why, it seems to me these things must tend to make home pleasant.”

“You are right, Mrs. Gove; we feel that by cultivating a taste for the beautiful in nature, we improve the character and soften the heart.”

“I know you are right; and not for my sake, but on Billy's account, I wish I could make Mr. Gove think as we do. But perhaps I do wrong to speak in this way, for Mr. Gove has more care now than any one man ought to have, and I know that he has no time for anything but barely to take care of what he has, without making any improvements. But I am in hopes when William grows up, that he will get time to set trees and make our home pleasant, for a more ardent lover of nature I surely never saw.”

“Mrs. Gove, of course your husband knows his own business, but I've often thought that it would be for your interest all round, if your husband had less land to care for. I mean, if he would sell some, it certainly would lessen his care as well as your own.”

“Perhaps so, but really Mr. Gove doesn't think it looks just right for a man to part with property which has been handed down from father to son, until it is



now in the fourth generation. 'Tis true I have a good deal of care, and must work hard, but I have no reason to complain, though 'twould be very nice, what little time I have to sew, to sit in such a cool, delightful place as this. Perhaps I'm all wrong, and think too much of these things."

Mrs. Gove was returning from the visit to her neighbour, which they had mutually enjoyed, when a pat on the shoulder caused her to exclaim, "Are you tired, Billy?" as she gazed earnestly at that pale face, and sought to read the language of those dark and handsome eyes. "Are you tired, my dear?"

"Yes, mother, O, I am very tired; for don't you think after I had helped father as long as he had anything for me to do, I went into that pretty grove where sis and I played the week before she died, and there, right by a little mossy bank, was a little larch-ree; and, mother, I wanted very much to dig it up and bring it home, and set it out by your bedroom window. I am sure, mother, it would look beautifully there, and then I never should see it without thinking of little Alice."

"Did your father take it up for you?" said Mrs. Gove, as she strove to force back the tears that would come.

"No, mother; I took the spade and tried; I dug all around it, but I couldn't start it a bit, when I tried to pull it up, and then I asked father if he would let Mike take it up for me. You know, mother, that Mike is a good hand, for he helped take up and set out all Mr. Norton's trees."

"And what did your father say, my dear?"



“He said, ‘don’t be so foolish, child—we’ve no time to fool away,’ or something of that kind. I wish *I* had strength to pull it up; but I don’t know as father would let me set it out. Do you think it is foolish, mother?”

“My dear child, your father has a great deal of care and anxiety, and you heard him say this morning, when the man called to tell him his fence all lay flat, and everybody’s cattle were in, that his work was driving him continually; so perhaps father thought ’twould be wrong to spend the time that is now so precious to us, in doing what we could get along without doing.”

“Well, mother, does father take much comfort? He is always behindhand, and he never finishes all the jobs he begins. Why, don’t you know last summer we had so much to do that we did not get time to hoe that piece of corn between the woods, and I heard father say my self, that it did not begin to pay for the ploughing. And, mother, you know I heard it talked over at the store, how father had to pay for that strip of land he bought of Mr. Chase, twice, because he did not get time to make the deed, and Mr. Chase died before ’twas done. When I hear people say to father, ‘you are the richest man in town,’ or, ‘you own the most land,’ why, I think, well, I don’t see as father is any happier than the neighbours, that haven’t half as much. Why, I heard father say to-day that he was harassed to death.”

The night after the above conversation, as Billy was quietly sleeping, and Mr. Gove sat with his arms folded, and his eyes resting on the wall, Mrs. Gove asked her husband, in rather a timid tone, if he had noticed how fully Mr. Norton’s fruit trees had blown.

“Well, I believe I saw them, or heard some one speak of it. But I am tired.”

“Yes, I think you must be; you’ve worked hard all day.”

“I have worked like a dog, and what does it amount to?”

“Do you think,” said his wife, “considering we have to work so hard and hire so much help, that it is for your interest to keep all the land?”

“Think—I don’t think anything about it. We’ve got it, and I must take care of it. I should look well spending what has so long been in the family. As long as property is in land it is safe; but change it into money, or anything else, and ten to one ’tis soon gone, nobody knows where.”

“Perhaps you are right; but it seems to me you could take much better care of less, make it more profitable, and at the same time relieve yourself of this care and anxiety, which I fear is wearing upon you. And then you know William is slender. I don’t think he’ll ever be able to work as hard as you have done.”

“He never will, if he is brought up to think he is too good to work. He has notions in his head now, that fancy will do him no good. You have been over to Norton’s this afternoon. I suppose his wife advised you what was best for us to do.—Why, Betsey, can’t you see through it all? They have been and sold half of their farm, and laid out the money in trees, and I don’t know what all,—sent the boys to school instead of teaching them to work, and so she wants us to do the same.—Ha! ha! misery likes company. The long and short

of it is, Betsey, Mrs. Norton wanted to get rid of work. I wish they had sold the whole concern and cleared out, for I see plainly you nor William can go over there, but it bewitches you. No—you will never see me covering my land, or surrounding my house with *boughten* trees. If I had time, I should like well enough to set out a maple or something near the house. I should like one or two for the horses to stand under, but I haven't the time, neither do I think it best to encourage any such notions in the boy. You know how it is—'if you give an inch they'll take an ell.' He begged hard for us to dig up a larch this afternoon, but indulgence will spoil any child. If I had done that for him, why he would only have wanted more; and if he got too many such notions, why he is headstrong, and the first we should know he would be off like others we know of. No; the only way to get along with children is to be *strict*; no arguing with them, and no giving way to their foolish wants."

"Do you think it was indulgence that made George White go to New York? I don't know but what it might be, his mother was dreadful careful of him."

"I should like to know what 'tis makes boys leave their fathers' homes and farms, and go off to the city, and barely get their board, if it isn't letting them have their will and way."

"I have no doubt that over-indulgence begets self-will, and overcomes a child's sense of duty, so that restraint is thrown off, and parental obligation disregarded; but, husband, I do believe one thing, and that is, if we wish Willie to love his home, we must make it happy,

if we wish his warmest affections to cluster around this place, we must make it attractive. You think the Norton boys are indulged too much, but this indulgence is nothing more than a desire on the parents' part, judiciously carried out, to make them useful and happy. And I believe they take the right course. No children love their home better than they do. Mrs. N. tells me that it is with the greatest reluctance that they leave home in the vacation, to visit their cousins in the city."

"Well, well, don't say any more, for I have as much as I can do to get through the day's work, and I for one want to sleep in the night! Mrs. Norton is welcome to her notions, and I will have mine!"

While Mr. G. is wrapped in the "sweet sleep of the labouring man," and Mrs. G. is revolving in her own mind the many different plans which suggest themselves to a mother's ever-watchful heart, for the good of her boy, let us take a peep at the character of both parents and child.

Had a stranger inquired of almost any one in N., "What sort of a man is Mr. Gove?" the answer would probably be to this effect: "Fine man, sir, upright, honest, and firm; *trifles* don't move him." Granted—but let us see if there can be, with these good qualities, nothing wanting.

Mr. G. was stern; in his view, the "*smoothing over*" of an affair was never advisable. Billy, as a child, had much to contend with in the way of passion, pride, and self-will; like almost all children, occasional acts of thoughtlessness and hasty impulse led him into error and its painful consequences. Had his father been

careful to "do justice to his better qualities, while at the same time he blamed and convinced him of his faults," all might have been well; but Mr. G. never met his errors in "love and conquered them by forgiveness." Unjust harshness actually confirmed him in error. Mr. G. was spoken of as a generous man; but, to use the beautiful language of one departed, "There are those who are lavish in attention and presents to friends, but who never imagine that their own home circle has the first and strongest claim to kindness, whether of word or deed. Affections and thoughts lavished on comparative strangers never radiate on home; but when given to home first, they shed light and kindness far and near." Mr. G. never won the heart of his child. How was it with the mother? She possessed the rare combination of "gentleness with firmness, submissiveness with dignity." Her anxious desire was to do justice to his better feelings, and while she wished to educate his mind, she was more anxious that his heart should be won and taught.

But little change, outwardly, was visible in the Gove family when William had reached his eighteenth year. The homestead remained the same—save some marks which "Time's effacing fingers" had not failed to make. The "ash-tree" by the spring was gone, and the maple "for the horse to stand under," had never been "set out."

One fine morning in May, William asked his father if he might have the sorrel horse to go to the village adjoining. Permission was given on condition that he

would return before dinner. Dinner came, and with it came William.

“What has our William been doing!” exclaimed Mr. Gove, as he gave a hasty glance at the window. “Cutting a wagon load of withes.”

“I don’t know; but I can’t see very well without my glasses.”

’Twas easy to see, however, that that hasty glance had ruffled the smooth current of his thoughts, for he at once knew that withes needed no roots. William took out the horse, wheeled the wagon into the shed, and entering the long kitchen, seated himself at the table. The mother, with her quick perception, failed not to understand why that shadow rested upon the father’s brow. Hardly a word was spoken—Mr. G., upon leaving the table, took up a newspaper, a thing which he rarely had time to do; it was evident to Billy, however, that he was not reading very intently, for the paper was upside down. When William left the house, he went directly for the spade and hoe, and walking deliberately down the hillside, south of the house, commenced making holes twelve feet apart, where he had helped his father plough the day before. He had thus been engaged half an hour, when, rising to wipe the heavy drops of moisture from his forehead, he saw his father looking earnestly at him.

“What are you doing, William?”

“I am fixing places to set out trees!”

“What kind of trees?”

“Peach and pear trees, sir.”

“Where did you get them?”



"I bought them at a tree auction to-day."

"You did! Well, you can't set them here, sir!"

"I can't—what's the reason?"

"There are reasons enough, though I am under no obligations to tell children; yet I won't be particular this time. In the first place, I wish you to understand once for all, that you take one step too far when you buy trees without leave or license; and more than that, proceed deliberately to put them on my best corn land. And now you can do what you please with the trees. You have taken far too much liberty. You shall never set them on my land."

Without one word, William shouldered his spade and walked to the house. His mother, who stood at the corner window, although she had heard no word spoken, understood the whole affair perfectly. She saw William shoulder the spade, and then her heart beat heavily; but quickly raising the corner of her apron, she wiped away the tears which were fast falling, and met her son with a smile.

"Well, mother, I've done," said he, as he sunk down on the old kitchen chair; "I've done trying to be anything here. *He* won't let me be anybody!"

"My child, don't speak so disrespectfully of your father. *He*, Billy, that sounds dreadfully; never say *that* again, my son."

"I can't help it, mother; I shan't stay here. You know what I told you last week, mother, and to-day I have had something come across my feelings, harder to bear than all. When I was coming from the village, I met a man with a double wagon, and a beautiful larch:



tree in it. I was hoping to buy it, so I asked him where he got it. 'Squire Gove gave it to me,' he replied. O, mother, wasn't that too much? I asked him who took it up; and he said his Irishman, that he called Mike I could have torn that tree in splinters, mother. I rode round by the grove, and sure enough, 'twas gone; and the mossy seat all trampled and torn. Do you think after that I would ask him to *let* me set out the trees? No, mother, if father can do without me, I can do without him. I shall go away as soon as you can get my things ready. Of course, the folks will say, 'What an ungrateful boy, to leave his father alone;' but why can't father try to please me as well as others—as well as strangers? There are the Norton boys—if father had done one-quarter for me that their father has done for them, I should be very, very happy. O, mother, don't feel so bad—you must not blame me. I know you are a real Christian, mother, but I ain't like you: you overlook, and forgive everything. I am somewhat like father; I wish I was just like you."

William expected his mother would entreat him to stay at home; but no, not one word did she say in favour of it. She knew these were little things to cause the boy to leave the home of his youth for a home among strangers; but she knew also that the joys and griefs at home are almost all made up of little, very little things.

We will hasten over the particulars of William's leaving home, and only say that his father's parting words were, "I can do without you as long as you can without me, William." In four weeks from this leave-

taking, William was a sort of waiter on board a Mississippi steamboat.

Mr. Gove hired an extra hand: many people shook their heads meaningly, and said it was a pity, a great pity, but nothing new or strange, for an only child to be spoiled by indulgence; but then, he was a pretty, bright boy, and they supposed it came hard to punish him; but "Spare the rod and spoil the child," was Scripture.

The summer was passed, the golden grain was garnered, and the rich fruits secured, when Mr. Gove, who had grown somewhat moody of late, called Mike to the back door, and giving him some directions, took his hat, and passing out the other door, joined him.

"Let me see, you have the spade and hoe. Well, now, come down with me to the side of the hill where the early corn was planted; and do you remember where the holes were, that William made last spring?"

"And sure 'tis not me that's afthur forgatting sich things; for didn't I put a flat stone by every hite of 'um; and didn't I in hoeing and harvest keep them from being shoved a bit? For do you mind, sir, I set a dale by the boy—he wouldn't hurt a baste, sir, and his heart is as big as a whale."

"Well, well, that's enough, Mike. Now, you bring all the trees you buried in the swamp, and set them out just as you did Norton's; and do you know which were the trees designed for the holes William had opened?"

"And faith, I mind it well; for didn't I tie a string round 'um, and lay 'um jes so?"

"Well, set them right; and when you have done them, call me from the house."

Mr. G. took the arm-chair, and moving it to the bedroom window, seemed lost in thought. Surely, he must be sick; for he never was known to sit down of a weekday except at meal times.

Two hours passed, and Mike was passing the window, when he was thus accosted by Mr. G.: "Have you done, Mike?"

"Sure, sir, a plasant job to me; I was lazy to quat it."

"Now take your spade, and prepare a place by this window, where you see I've placed the stick, for a larger tree. Now, if you have it right, go over to Captain Burns', and ask him if he will sell me that larch-tree in the west corner of his birch lot. Tell him the price is no object; and be careful you don't break any of the small roots; be very careful, Mike."

"No fear o' that, sir."

"Stop, that is not all. When you come home, call at Smith's, and tell him I have concluded to let him have the land, and tell him to come over this afternoon, and Squire Norton will be here to fix the writings. Tell all who inquire for me that I am sick."

Before night, one-third of Mr. Gove's land was in Mr. Smith's possession, and the deeds on record. The larch seemed quite at home by the bedroom window.

And now, what strange spell was this upon Mr. Gove?

"O, there are moments in our life,  
When but a thought, a word, a look has power  
To wrest the cup of happiness aside,  
And stamp us wretched."

The evening before, Mr. G. chanced to take up a

school-book of William's, and on a blank leaf were written, in a neat school-boy hand, these simple lines:—

“’Tis the last blooming summer these eyes shall behold;  
Long, long ere another, this heart shall be cold:  
For O, its warm feelings on earth have been chilled,  
And I grieve not that shortly its pulse will be stilled.”

Mr. G. dropped the book, and wandered, he hardly knew whither, till he found himself in the swamp where William's trees were buried. What followed, the reader already knows.

Mrs. G. had finished her day's work, and was seating herself in the little rocking-chair, when Mr. G. called to her from the bedroom.

“Betsey, will you sit in here? I want you to write a letter to William to-night.”

“To-night! Why it is after nine o'clock!”

“I know it, but I shall feel better if it is done to-night. I feel sick all over, and perhaps I am nervous.”

“I will write what you wish me to, my dear husband.”

“O, don't say so—but tell Billy I wish him to come home without delay; tell him for the love he bears his mother, and for the love *I bear him*, to come now. Say that my hand trembles so, I can't write this; but I say it from my inmost heart.”

Mrs. G., with an overflowing heart, quickly performed the delightful task.

“And now, Betsey, I will try to ask God to watch over that boy, and to soften my own proud heart.”

“O! when the heart is full—when bitter thoughts  
Come crowding thickly up for utterance,

And the poor common words of courtesy  
Are such a very mockery—how much  
The bursting heart may pour itself in prayer.”

June, beautiful June, the “month of roses,” found Mr. G. in that “old arm-chair,” by the bedroom window, but O, how changed!

“His hair was thin, and on his brow  
A record of the cares of many a year,  
Cares that were ended and forgotten now.”

It was the last day of his earthly existence. The gentle breeze, as it swept through the light foliage of that beautiful larch, caused him to open those eyes so soon to be closed for ever—and as they met, for the last time on earth, those of his own Billy, upon whose arm his head rested, he whispered, “I die happy now,” and the scene of life had closed.



#### THE SPIRIT-MAIDEN OF RHINELAND.

It was almost evening; the sun was sinking upon its imperial couch of gorgeous clouds, whilst beautiful beams of crimson and gold were reflected through the trees. The calm, broad-bosomed Rhine slept along its green-embowered banks, and the dying sun-rays twinkled and flashed in its blue depths.

The summer air was soft, and sweet as a breath of roses; and a gush of dreamy melody from some idling

bark upon the water, stole as a "spirit's presence" over the earth.

Paul stood at the door of his father's mansion, watching the changing colours of the beautiful landscape. His heart was overflowing with a burst of tumultuous emotions, thanksgiving and praise to the Watchful One. He turned his head over his shoulder, and glanced back into the chamber which he had but just left; there, in his accustomed place, the evening glow tinging his silvery locks, sat the blind and aged father, and at his side, upon a low stool, was seated his young cousin, the meek and fair-haired Bertha.

The maiden held her lute, and her white fingers glanced like snow-flakes over the glistening chords as she played a light wild melody. She was singing a Rhinish love-song, and her voice, so sweet and low, fell like the tones of a silver bell upon the evening air.

A soft and holy influence was enveloping Paul's senses; but he thought he saw a white figure glancing in the wood, and a spirit-voice seemed calling to him, as it said,

"Paul! Paul! where art thou?"

The voice called, and the echoes caught the wild, witching melody, and Paul knew that it was the voice of his spirit-maiden singing to him. He walked forth into the wood with a saddened heart, and seated himself upon a mossy stone.

"Etheria! Etheria! here is thy Paul," he called in answer; but the voice was silent, and he heard only the sound of the wind, as it moved in the leaves, or the dreamy tinklings of the fountain.

Paul had never seen his spirit-maiden, save in his dreams, when she came to him clothed in all her virgin beauty, and whispered to him of her love. But she floated upon every gold-tinted cloud. She smiled in the shining sunlight, and breathed words of love in the beautiful flowers. He saw her not, and yet he loved.

The sun was gone quite down, and had left, as a remembrance of what had passed, and what was yet to be, a crown of glorious rose-clouds lingering in the sky. Paul wandered again sorrowfully towards the mansion. Bertha was sitting at the tablette, with her Bible open before her, and she read to the aged man the holy words. Never had she looked so lovely. Her soft blue eyes were filled with tears as she read, and her bright fair hair fell like a beautiful veil over her neck and shoulders. As Paul gazed upon her beauty, a gleam of flashing silver light glanced through the apartment; but an instant, and it was gone again. It was not the moonlight—it was the smile of the spirit-maiden. And Paul thought no more of the fair Bertha, but mourned for his soul's shadow.

When the devotion was over, Bertha led the old man to his chamber, and returning again, found Paul sitting listless and gloomy.

“Paul,” whispered the beautiful Rhinish maiden, as she laid her hand gently upon his arm, “thou art sorrowful, and I may not comfort thee.”

Her tones were very sad and reproachful. Paul drew her towards him, and kissed her fair brow.

“I am sorrowful, my beloved Bertha,” he said, mournfully, “for I must leave this beautiful Rhineland—my



spirit-love awaiteth me. Hearest thou not her voice calling me? Seest thou not her wavy tresses beckoning me? My love awaiteth me, and I may not stay."

Bertha knew of his strange love for the spirit-maiden, and she bowed her face amid her ringlets, and wept.

"Weep not, my beloved one," said Paul, in a soothing voice; "weep not, I shall soon return again, and thy heart shall be made glad by the gay smiles and witching tones of my own spirit-maiden."

Bertha pushed back the drooping tresses from her weeping face, and gliding from his embrace reached the door.

"Paul," she whispered, sadly, "when thou art far distant, forget not the maiden of Rhineland."

Alas! Paul knew not the deep and holy love which rested in that innocent heart for him.

Paul reclined upon his couch, but slept not. The moon looked down at him, and the stars twinkled and danced in the sky. A voice full of mirth and witchery came floating on the breeze, and whispering in the leaflets. Paul arose from his couch, and stealing from his chamber, gained the open air. With quickened footsteps he reached the wood, and hastened to the fountain. And there, among the trees, stood a maiden of wondrous beauty, clad in shadowy garments, beckoning and smiling through the shower of the fountain.

Paul sprang to catch the beautiful form in his embrace; but, as he came nearer, it still receded—the mirthful tones still calling,

"Paul! Paul! where art thou?"

Sometimes she hid among the trees, and then again

her soft breath fanned his cheek, and her dark tresses fell like a cloud over his face. Now she vanished in a wreath of spray, or seemed lost in her own strain of fairy music, and then she floated in the moonlight, smiling, and waving her white arms. But ever sang she, and ever followed the youth.

Paul stood upon the summit of a high mountain, whither he had followed his spirit-love. His father's mansion was lost to view, and the spirit-maiden had vanished in a mist of snow—her voice was hushed. He had reached the highest peak: but he was alone—the clouds above, and the snow below. He thought he heard the vesper-bell ringing on the air, and Bertha's voice reading the evening devotion; the lulling sound of dreamy whisperings bewildered him, and he sank upon the ground insensible.

\* \* \* \* \*

The years pass by in their varied attire, ever choosing a new devotee to worship at the shrines of bitter sorrow, or awakening hopes. The aged father was long since dead, and was buried upon the banks of the beautiful Rhine. The witchern drooped its branches over his grave, and the "sad bird" sang mournfully in the green leaves.

The gentle Bertha dwelt alone in the old mansion, more beautiful and more beloved than before. She often thought of her old love, Paul, but he had disappeared years ago, and was perhaps buried in a foreign land. Thus, like a fair lily, she bloomed in sequestered loveliness upon the banks of the Rhine, ever modest, gentle, and meek

One lovely day, when the summer had returned again in fragrance and flowers, Bertha sat at her lattice netting a silken fillet to bind her fair tresses. Old memories came crowding around her heart, and tears trembled upon her golden lashes. She thought of one so dear to her heart—Paul. A tall, sun-burnt man, with a saddened, care-worn look upon his features, came slowly up the pathway which led to the door. He was changed—much changed, and older, but Bertha's heart knew that it was Paul. He reached the door-way—Bertha threw down her silken net, and, gliding to the door, cried, "Paul! Paul! is it thou?"

In an instant he folded her in his arms, and she rested, weeping and smiling, upon his breast.

"And the spirit-maiden, Paul?" asked the fair Bertha, as they sat, side by side, in the father's hall, as in days of yore.

"Ask me not, Bertha," he answered, in a low voice, as he pressed her hand still closer in his, "ask me not. It is enough, alas! too much to know that I sought for the ideal, and knew not the true value of the real. Had I but dreamed how fond and true was the gentle heart that beat for me in mine own Rhineland, then would the spirit-maiden have been, indeed, as a shadow."

Bertha felt that she was beloved at last, and she rested her fair cheek fondly upon his bosom, whispering, "Oh, Paul! shall we not be happy now?"

\* \* \* \*

Many—ah, how many have deserted the substance, which was within their grasp, for the shadow, which, uncertain, flits hither and thither! Ideal bliss takes wings

and flies away; real happiness folds its pinions amid the flowers of earth, nor seeks a better resting-place. The substance places a wreath of emerald around the heart, unchanging in its hues; the shadow rests in the soul as an opal, with its many beauties. Then seek not for a happiness greater than that of the present hour; the morn arises in golden beauty, but the night may be a clouded sky, starless and unsearchable.



#### PASSING AWAY.

WE do not sufficiently avail ourselves of this trite and common saying—there is a world of meaning in it, that would brush away many a tear, and many a silly care which is spent upon trifles; for it is a fact that tears are shed about very small matters.

A mother bought for her little daughter a new bonnet, but the colour was not exactly the shade of her friend Ellen's, neither was it the precise shape. She wept till her eyes were red, and she had to stay from school. The bonnet was worn but a few weeks, and laid away for a mourning one, and the tears were needed for the parent's dying bed.

A young lady has been dreadfully mortified. She forgot to change the things in the pocket of her dress, and what did she do but draw out a coarse shilling hand kerchief, in the parlour, before ladies and gentlemen.

“Oh what a crime, to use such a poor thing in any

way, and leave one's self liable to such a mistake—if it was clean, no matter—dear me, it was horrible !”

My dear, it was not a shadow in contrast with that pert answer you gave to your dear mamma as you left the room. Who cared for that pocket handkerchief? every one was absorbed in their own interests—the next we hear of some of that little party, one or more were on the other side of the globe; and if they remembered anything about you, it was something you said, or some pleasant or unpleasant temper you indicated in your behaviour or expression.

“Your bonnet looks exceedingly stiff and plain,” said one sister to another; “it needs the touches of Madame, to give it a pretty, easy air.” “Passing away, it will be with the trash in the garret this time next year;” and skipped off to her music lesson.

“This dress is a perfect eye sore to me,” said Mrs Landon to her husband, “and if you had not overpersuaded me I would not have bought it—I might have known it was entirely out of fashion, and would be, before I could put it on.” Her husband made no reply, for he too well remembered the drain it was upon his small funds to purchase that dress, and for him to say he hoped it would do for a good while to come, would only be adding fuel to the flame. So he remained silent. Poor woman, who is minding her dress? if she is making a comfortable home for her children, and striving to help her struggling husband through his difficulties, she is indeed beautifully decorated.

“Your hat would look sweet,” said Amelia to her friend, “if that ribbon was a different colour.” “Oh

don't name it to me, it has given me a deal of trouble, I never put it on but I hate it, I cannot bear to look at it in the glass—I have tried every way to manage to buy a new ribbon like Mary Fanshaw's, but cannot make it out. You know papa gives us a stated sum for our clothing." Dear child, it was the last bonnet she wore—disease confined her to the house for months, and then she was clad for the tomb.

"I am sick and tired of looking at this old-fashioned furniture; and really, Mr. Edmund, you must get me something new, if it is only for this parlour; I am ashamed to go with my neighbours to call, and expect them back again, for we do look so shabby—we have not had a new sofa or chair since we were married." Mr. Edmund was shaving, and it was just as well for him and his wife too, for he began to think of the old sofa in his New England home, that had belonged to his grandmother, and how pleased his mother was when it was brought into her house. As a sequel to his thoughts he let slip from his tongue, "delightful hours." We may suppose they were the happy, easy, contented ones, he had passed in that thrifty, unambitious home where the old sofa was so prominent a piece of furniture.

Even the unfashionable sofa and chairs went under the hammer, and poor Mrs. E. had to content herself with less elegant comforts.

How often we should let "*well enough*" alone, in our homes, our dress, husbands, wives, and children!

"Oh! did you notice that elegant dress Sophy Estmore had on, when she called on her bridal tour? I did not know which to admire most, the dress, the fit, or her



beautiful figure—all seemed so perfect. She looked so sweet, as she took her husband's arm when they left the door—he appeared perfectly happy."

Yes, and did you know she was buried last week, dressed for the grave in her bridal attire?

"What a shabby lace that is on Mary Green's neck! I would not wear lace if I could not have something better than that." "Indeed!" replied a voice in the distance; "then Mary Green is better off than you; for she is perfectly contented to wear that which is within the bounds of her circumstances; and would not have her dear papa tried and troubled, to provide her with vanities that are passing away."

---

#### HINTS FOR HUSBANDS.

THERE is an article afloat in the papers entitled "Golden Rules for Wives," which enjoins upon the ladies a rather abject submission to their husbands' will and whims. Iron rules, not golden ones, we should call them. But the art of living together in harmony is a very difficult art; and, instead of confuting the positions of the authors of the Rules aforesaid, we offer the following, as the substance of what a wife likes in a husband:—

Fidelity is her heart's first and most just demand. The act of infidelity a true wife cannot forgive—it rudely breaks the tie that bound her heart to his, and *that* tie can never more exist.



The first place in her husband's affections no true wife can learn to do without. When she loses that, she has lost her husband; she is a widow; and has to endure the pangs of bereavement intensified by the presence of what she no longer possesses. There is a living mummy in the house, reminding her of her loss in the most painful manner.

A woman likes her husband to excel in those qualities which distinguish the masculine from the feminine being, such as strength, courage, fortitude, and judgment. She wants her husband to be wholly a MAN. She cannot entirely love one whom she cannot entirely respect, believe in, and rely on.

A wife dearly likes to have her husband stand high in the regard of the community in which they reside. She likes to be thought by her own sex a fortunate woman in having such a husband as she has. She has a taste for the respectable, desires to have a good-looking front door, and to keep up a good appearance generally. Some wives, it is said, carry this too far; and some husbands, we know, are dangerously complaisant in yielding to the front-door ambition of their wives. But a good husband will like to gratify his wife in this respect as far as he can, without sacrificing more important objects.

Perfect sincerity a wife expects, or at least has a right to expect, from her husband. She desires to know the real state of the case, however it may be concealed from the world. It wrings her heart, and wounds her pride, to discover that her husband has not wholly confided in her. A man may profitably consult his wife on almost

any project; it is due to her that he should do so, and she is glad to be consulted.

Above most other things, a wife craves from her husband appreciation. The great majority of wives lead lives of severe and anxious toil. With unimaginable anguish and peril to their own lives, they become mothers. Their children require incessant care. "Only the eye of God watches like a mother's," says Fanny Fern, in that chapter of "Ruth Hall" which depicts with such power and truth a mother's agonizing anxieties. And besides her maternal cares, a wife is the queen-regent of a household kingdom. She has to think, and plan, and work for everybody. If, in all her labours and cares, she feels that she has her husband's sympathy and gratitude; if he helps her where a man can help a woman; if he notices her efforts, applauds her skill, and allows for her deficiencies—all is well. But to endure all this, and yet meet with no appreciating word, or glance, or act from him for whom and whose she toils and bears, is very bitter.

A wife likes her husband to show her all due respect in the presence of others; she cannot endure to be reproved or criticised by him when others can hear it. Indeed, it is most wrong in a husband thus to put his wife to shame; and we cannot help secretly admiring the spirit of that Frenchwoman who, when her husband had so wronged her, refused ever again to utter a word, and for twenty years lived in the house a dumb woman. We admire her spirit, though not her mode of manifesting it. Husbands owe the most profound respect to their wives, for their wives are the mothers of their

children. No man has the slightest claim to the character of a gentleman who is not more scrupulously polite to his wife than to any other woman. We refer here to the essentials of politeness, not its forms; we mean kindness and justice in little things.

A wife likes her husband to be considerate. Unexpected kindnesses and unsolicited favours touch her heart. She appreciates the softened tread when she is sick; she enjoys the gift brought from a distance, and everything which proves to her that her husband thinks of her comfort and her good.

Husband, reflect on these things! Your wife has confided her happiness to you. You can make it unspeakably wretched, if you are ignoble and short-sighted. Let the contest between husbands and wives be this— which shall do most for the happiness of the other.



#### BUY ONLY WHAT YOU WANT.

To buy nothing you do not want is a maxim as old almost as society itself. But it is also one that is continually slipping out of mind, and which cannot, therefore, be brought forward again too frequently. Spending money, in fact, is a vice common to human nature. Where one man degrades himself by being a miser, ten run constant peril of ruining themselves by extravagance. It is so fine to have elegant furniture, to live in a handsome house, or to dress one's wife and children

in rich apparel, that it requires an unusual degree of firmness, especially in this prosperous age, to resist the temptation. If everybody was compelled to pay cash for such gratifications, there would be some slight check on this tendency to useless expenditure. But credit is so easily obtained in this country, and buyers are so sanguine of being ready when settling day comes, that thousands of families are induced annually to cripple their future comforts, by indulging in present follies. Half the men who reach old age impoverished, and perhaps even a greater number, owe their dependent condition, at that saddest of all times to be beggared, to early extravagance.

If we were all to buy only what we wanted, this would not be. We are far from recommending a niggardly parsimony; for one of the purposes of wealth is that it should be distributed in encouraging trade and the arts. But still even the wealthiest, with few exceptions, frequently buy what they do not want; while those less favoured incessantly violate this golden rule. The preacher, lawyer, or physician, attracted by some new and costly book, persuades himself that his profession requires he should have it, and spends on it a sum that he often needs for more necessary purposes before the year is over. The wife, charmed by a new style of dress, lavishes away her money, is delighted for a while, but lives to repent it, if she is a woman of sense. The father, proud of his daughter, thinks no expense too great to gratify her whims. The young man, fond of horses, does not stop to count the cost when coveting a famous trotter. The fashionable couple, who like to be

surrounded with mirrors, pictures, and fine furniture generally, squander money disproportionately on such costly gewgaws. Yet all learn, sooner or later, to regret what they have done, since they find they have added nothing to their happiness, as tens of thousands have discovered before, after buying what they did not really want.

Franklin's homely story about the whistle would be well to be remembered by us all. It is not enough that a purchase gratifies us at the time. To be a judicious expenditure, it should be such a one as we can recur to afterwards with satisfaction. If Mrs. A., when she moves into her new house, spends so much money on furniture that her husband's dinners suffer by it, is he not paying too dear for his whistle? If Mrs. B. gives so elegant a party to her friends that the housekeeping is stinted all the rest of the winter; if Mrs. C., by going to Cape May with her daughters, makes such an inroad on her husband's salary, that his old coat has to last another winter; if Mrs. D.'s piano for that prodigy, "Our Marianne," takes the earnings of whole weeks—what is all this but paying too dear for the whistle? Whenever we buy what we don't want, we deprive ourselves of things we really require. To be wise is to err, if anything, on the other side. If we deny ourselves a little, if we learn to buy nothing until we *are sure* we want it, we shall both avoid its perils and extravagance and discipline our characters. Amid the hurry and temptations of this prosperous age, it is well to recall occasionally these old maxims of prudence and wisdom. Time thus spent is not wasted.

## AN ANGEL BY THE HEARTH.

**THEY** tell me unseen spirits  
Around about us glide ;  
**Beside** the stilly waters  
Our erring footsteps guide :  
'Tis pleasant, thus believing  
Their ministry on earth :  
*I know* an angel sitteth  
This moment by my hearth.

If false-lights, on life's waters,  
To wreck my soul appear ;  
**With** finger upward pointing,  
She turns me with a tear :  
'Twere base to slight the warning,  
And count it little worth,  
Of her, the loving angel,  
That sitteth by my hearth.

She wins me with caresses  
From passion's dark defiles ;  
She guides me when I falter,  
And strengthens me with smiles ;  
It may be, unseen angels  
Beside me journey forth,  
*I know* that one is sitting  
This moment by my hearth.

A loving wife. O brothers,  
An angel here below ;  
**Alas!** your eyes are holden  
Too often till they go ;  
Ye upward look while grieving,  
When they have passed from earth ;—  
**O** cherish well, those sitting  
This moment by the hearth !



## A WORD TO YOUNG HUSBANDS.

WALKING the other day with a valued friend who had been confined a week or two by sickness to his room, he remarked that a husband might learn a good lesson by being occasionally confined to his house, by having in this way an opportunity of witnessing the cares and never-ending toils of his wife, whose burdens and duties, and patient endurance, he might never have otherwise understood. There is a great deal in this thought. Men, especially young men, are called by their business during the day mostly away from home, returning only at the hours for meals; and as they then see nearly the same routine of duty, they begin to think it is their own lot to perform all the drudgery, and to be exercised with the weight of care and responsibility. But such a man has got a wrong view of the case; he needs an opportunity for more extended observation; and it is perhaps for this very reason that a kind providence arrests him by sickness, that he may learn in pain what he would fail to observe in health.

We have seen a good many things said to wives, especially to young wives, exposing their faults, perhaps magnifying them, and expounding to them, in none of the kindest terms, their duty and the offices pertaining to a woman's sphere. Now, we believe that wives, as a whole, are really better than they are admitted to be. We doubt if there can be found a great number of wives who are disagreeable and negligent, without some pal-



pable coldness or shortcoming on the part of their husbands. So far as we have had an opportunity for observation, they are far more devoted and faithful than those who style themselves their lords, and who, by the customs of society, have other and generally more pleasant and varied duties to perform. We protest then against these lectures so often and so obtrusively addressed to the ladies, and insist upon it that they must, most of them, have been written by some fusty bachelors who know no better, or by some inconsiderate husbands who deserve to have been old bachelors to the end of their lives.

But is there nothing to be said on the other side? Are husbands so generally the perfect, amiable, injured beings they are so often represented? Men sometimes declare that their wives' extravagance has picked their pockets; that their never-ceasing tongues have robbed them of their peace; and their general disagreeableness has driven them to the tavern and gaming-table; but this is generally the wicked excuse for a most wicked life on their own part. The fact is, men often lose their interest in their homes by their own neglect to make their homes interesting and pleasant. It should never be forgotten that the wife has her rights—as sacred after marriage as before—and a good husband's devotion to the wife after marriage will concede to her quite as much attention as he gallantly did while a lover. If it is otherwise, he most generally is at fault.

Take a few examples. Before marriage, a young man would feel some delicacy about accepting an invitation to spend an evening in company where his lady-love had

not been invited. After marriage, is he always as particular? During the days of courtship, his gallantry would demand that he should make himself agreeable to her; after marriage, it often happens that he thinks more of being agreeable to himself. How often it happens that married men, after having been away from home the livelong day, during which the wife has toiled at her duties, go at evening to some place of amusement, and leave her to toil on alone, uncheered and unhappy! How often it happens that her kindest offices pass unobserved and unrewarded even by a smile, and her best efforts are condemned by the fault-finding husband!

How often it happens, even when the evening is spent at home, that it is employed in silent reading, or some other way that does not recognise the wife's right to share in the enjoyment even of the fireside!

Look, ye husbands, a moment, and remember what your wife was when you took her, not from compulsion, but from your own choice; a choice, based, probably, on what you considered her superiority to all others. She was young, perhaps the idol of a happy home; she was gay and blithe as the lark, and the brothers and sisters at her father's fireside cherished her as an object of endearment. Yet she left all to join her destiny with yours; to make your home happy, and to do all that woman's love could prompt, and woman's ingenuity devise, to meet your wishes, and to lighten the burdens which might press upon you in your pilgrimage. She, of course, had her expectations too. She could not entertain feelings which promised so much without forming some idea of reciprocation on your part; and she

did expect you would, after marriage, perform those kind offices of which you were so lavish in the days of your betrothment.

She became your wife! left her own home for yours --burst asunder as it were, the bands of love which had bound her to her father's fireside, and sought no other home than your affections; left, it may be, the ease and delicacy of a home of indulgence—and now, what must be her feelings, if she gradually awakes to the consciousness that you love her less than before; that your evenings are spent abroad; that you only come home at all to satisfy the demands of your hunger, and to find a resting-place for your head when weary, or a nurse for your sick-chamber when diseased?

Why did she leave the bright hearth of her youthful days? Why did you ask her to give up the enjoyment of a happy home? Was it simply to darn your stockings, mend your clothes, take care of your children, and watch over your sick-bed? Was it simply to conduce to your own comfort? Or was there some understanding that she was to be made happy in her connexion with the man she had dared to love?

Nor is it a sufficient answer that you reply that you give her a home; that you feed and clothe her. You do this for your health. You would do it for an indifferent housekeeper. She is your wife, and unless you attend to her wants, and some way answer the reasonable expectation you raised by your attention before marriage, you need not wonder if she be dejected, and her heart sink into insensibility; but if this be so, think well! who is the cause of it.

## A WIFE'S SERMON; OR, HINTS TO HUSBANDS.

“HUSBANDS, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.” This shall be my text, which I had some trouble in finding. Kind admonitions, which the great apostle addressed to husbands and wives, met my eye; but they were not the *precise* words I wished to find. I consulted “Cruden,” but at first with no better success. I began to feel myself in a situation similar to his who spoke of “those beautiful words of Holy Writ, ‘He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.’” But another effort gained me the victory. I looked for the “*bitter*” word in the sentence, and there it is, in Col. iii. 19. Perhaps the class here addressed may likewise have *overlooked* this passage.

That young man who has just left Hymen’s altar, may consider Paul “as rather weak,” to address such an admonition to any who sustain the delightful relation into which he has just entered. Very well; if he never needs it, he shall be forgiven for not understanding its necessity.

Says another, more mature, “Such commands, of course, were intended for the immoral; for the drunkard, who leaves his wife to suffer, or comes home from his midnight revels to give her a deeper sense of wretchedness; for the gambler, who takes from the drawer the scanty earnings which his wife has laid by for the hour of sickness, and which his hard heart has refused to supply; for the *faithless* husband, who, forgetful of his

marriage vow, finds in the society of the "strange woman" an inducement to forsake his home. I do not wonder that one so devoted as Paul to doing good to his fellow-men, and so desirous to aid his fellow-men in a faithful discharge of duty, should have left a word of caution for all.

But, friends, look more carefully, and you will perceive that the apostle was addressing a very different class of persons, members of the church at Colosse, professors of religion, and, for aught we know, "in good and regular standing."

"Well," says another, "I care not for whom it was written. I believe a little common sense will help me to understand my duty as a husband as well as Paul did, who probably was not a *married* man. When I am engaged for the support of my wife and children, harassed almost to death with cares, I expect when I go to my house to have a *quiet home*, and to find my wife ready to receive me. She has nothing to do but the work of her own family, and there are only six of us, including the baby. I wonder what she finds to do. Reads, probably; she always had a fondness for books, and now I think of it, I found a volume on the foot of the cradle. I even spoke to her once because she let the children play with my books; but *she* was the guilty one, I suspect, after all, as she said nothing in reply. Well, if it be so, I will propose that she take in sewing, or bind shoes, and help me support the family. I can't do everything."

If I could utter a word in the ear of this man, I would say, "It is pleasant to find you so well under

stand the peculiarly easy lot of your wife, and the delightfully comfortable situation she is called to fill for your special benefit. But then here is the text; it is meant for some one—'Husbands, love your wives, be not BITTER against them.' Your remarks have an air of severity, and I will draw my bow at a venture."

"Bitter" is a word which conveys an unpleasant idea. Did you never notice the sad contortions of a child's face when he takes a disagreeable medicine? I have known a babe entirely weaned by just applying a bitter substance to the fountain from which it had been accustomed to receive its nourishment. It turned away with loathing and disgust. Can it be that *bitter words* would ever cause a wife to turn from the plighted love of her youth? Try not the dangerous experiment.

I have seen the unshed tear tremble in the eye, as some careless, thoughtless, but harsh word of a husband caused a mental struggle, and told of the more than childless self-control which his wife possessed. I knew a man whose praise was in all the churches, a professor in one of our theological schools, and I am not quite sure that he did not write a commentary on Paul, who needed this admonition. He never used his wife *unkindly*, as the world understands that word; but every day he said unkind, unpleasant things, which seemed to her very "*bitter*." He was quite an alchemist; he always brought his crucible to the table when he partook of his meals, and among the pleasant viands prepared under the careful eye of his wife, he always found something which was not right, something *bitter* for his wife. He sleeps in the village churchyard now, and his intellectual ad-



mirrors reared a tablet to his memory, and over the unpleasant remembrances of his private life charitable friends draw a veil, which we would not remove, and offer the apology, "He was a very nervous man."

To-night, when you have taken your tea, got your letters and papers from the post-office, read them, and when you feel inclined to doze in your easy chair (with your feet comfortably resting on the stove, or in another chair), hear a word of remonstrance. Do not speak again as unkindly as you did when you came home, and found the baby crying, and the older ones rather noisy: do not call your home a "bedlam," and tell your *better half* "you do wish she would give the children their supper earlier, and get them to bed, so that you can have a little quiet." Perhaps you were tired, very likely it was so; but your wife, with "nothing to do" but her own work, and see to her children, is more, far more wearied than you; and if you knew how her head aches, and how her exhausted nature calls for repose; if you had the love for her which you owe her, you would not need to be told "Husbands, love your wives, and be not BITTER against them."

Hear a few words more. While your wife is plying her needle, let me amuse you. Now, be honest, and say if the duties of your wife do not occupy more of your thoughts, and are not more familiar to you than you own? Do you not oftener inquire at the bookstore for a treatise which relates to her, as a woman, wife, or mother, than for one which relates to men as husbands and fathers?

The world is full of books for woman; she is told of



responsibilities which angels might tremble to assume; anon she is taught that man is creation's lord and her inferior position is to act as *his* "waiter," to take care of *his* children, *his* house, to see to *his* wardrobe, and so all round the circle of her duties. Sometimes she gets so jostled about she almost forgets where her last resting-place was, and wishes success to the Woman's Rights Convention, so that she may unmolested stand side by side with proud man, whose right and might are never practically questioned.

Oh, husband! did you see the colour mount to your wife's temples, the other day, when in the presence of that visiter you brought home, you noticed some little deficiencies at the table, instead of passing them by? She felt as badly as you, because the meat was not cooked just as she wished, and the castor was not properly dusted. You should remember that dinner was prepared when the babe was crying for its mother; perhaps you will recollect that you looked into the kitchen, and asked her "if she could not keep the child still, for you could not hear yourself speak." Was not that a bitter word? Ask her.

Listen, while I tell you a part of what she is expected to do every year of her life. How many shirts do you expect her to make for you? How many handkerchiefs to hem? How many vests and pants to be cut and made? Coats and collars you probably get already made. How many dresses must she manufacture for herself and children? How many little pairs of drawers and skirts for the children, to fit them for the ever-varying season? How many aprons are to be prepared? And when all

these are in readiness, with other articles which I might name, what is to be done with them? When worn, they must be washed, ironed, and mended, over and over again, by her industry. Did you ever think how many meals she prepares in a year? How many times the table is laid, the dishes removed and washed, the knives scoured, the floors swept, the lamps trimmed, the beds made, the furniture dusted, and the children washed, dressed, and kindly cared for? All the time must she feel this pressure of labour and anxiety, and very like she is sinking slowly (her constitution giving away, although unnoticed by your familiar eye), until consumption is upon her, and she is gone; the "place that knew her knows her no more."

Now, tell me, do you really think that she will have to take in shirts to make, or something else, to *keep her from wasting her time in reading?* Think of all this, and suppress that *bitter* word, because a button is missing on your coat, or the string was forgotten which should have been sewed to your dickey. It is little things which make the bitterness as well as the sweetness of life.

Your wife is under no greater obligation to have a smile of welcome on your return, than you are to bring perpetual sunshine to the hearthstone; and if she fails sometimes, and you find her irritable and unpleasant, forgive it, and pass it by. You know not the trials and vexations she has met; speak gently, very gently; and let no root of bitterness spring up to trouble you. Do not tell her she has altered, and that she can bear nothing from you, she has become so sensitive; tell her

not of her faded cheeks, and her hair, which is turning prematurely gray. She does not like to hear you make such remarks, even if she knows they are true. Ask yourself rather, why it is so? Is it the effect of a life of ease and carelessness, or a life of care and labour for you and your family?

I could tell you of a poor labouring mechanic, on whom the untoward gales of adversity have long beat; but when sheltered in the haven of a happy, though humble home, he cares but little what rages without. Like Wordsworth's peasants, seldom through the long winter does the wife see the face of her husband; or the children of their father by the light of the sun, except on the hours of the holy day. The table is neatly spread each evening for the morrow's early breakfast. Such preparations as can be made are in readiness, and while the stars are yet shining, long ere the day dawneth, the husband and father prepares anew for his daily toil. He *chooses* to make his own coffee, and eat his breakfast alone, if thereby his loved ones can slumber a little longer. He is cheered amid his labours by thoughts of them, and he knows that when the mother and dear children kneel at the altar of morning prayer, the absent one will never be forgotten, and the petition will ascend that "as his day, so his strength may be."

As he returns wearied to his family at night, it is not to say *bitter* things, or to look *bitterly*. The babe reaches out her arms for him, and older ones cling around his neck, and he envies not that man who is displeased because the custard is not seasoned to his taste, or the beef-steak prepared precisely according to his wishes. After

the evening meal, and prayers, the children are told some pretty story, and laid to rest by a father's hand, and he murmurs not at his lot, nor sees aught for which to murmur. Proud man may smile with derision at this scene, but God does not. Hard is the road they travel, though it was not *always* so. The world cares but little for them; and they covet not its treacherous smiles. That husband can enjoy the pleasant converse and affection of his family, though there may be those that whisper, "He must have a *shiftless* wife."

Full well *he* knows and appreciates the self-denial, cares, and labours she is every day called to bear. Well, too, does he remember when her eyes became sunken, when the hue of the rose faded from her fair cheek, and when her dark glossy hair turned by sickness, and not by age; and *he* is fully prepared to echo the language of his dear children, as with partial eyes they exclaim, "Mother, dear mother, how pretty you are!"

I have told you a true story of humble life, cheered by affection and trust in God. If in a different station you would find such joys and such dispositions, read that book which our friend prizes highly, and in which he found the rules that regulated his intercourse with his family.

And let me say, in parting, that if the love has languished which was once strong in your heart, oh, kindle it yet again, for there are dark days in store for you, when you will need all the cheering influence its brightness and warmth can yield, all the sympathy and support which that wounded and neglected heart can bestow. "Husbands, love your wives, and be not BITTER against them."

## MY WIFE.

WRITTEN WHILE RECOVERING FROM A SEVERE SICKNESS.

I HEARD her oh, how cautiously,  
Open my bed-room door ;  
I heard her step as noiselessly,  
(To my couch) across the floor.  
I felt her hands my temples press,  
Her lips just touching mine :  
And in my anguish and distress,  
'Twere sinful to repine.  
Our pilgrimage is nearly through—  
We've passed life's mountain brow ;  
I thought I loved her years ago—  
I *know* I love her now.

Her face was hovering over mine—  
Her warm tears on my cheek ;  
Her whispered prayer of thought divine  
Rose fervently but meek ;  
Her bosom rested on my arm ;  
I felt its troublous throe ;  
I knew the cause of its alarm ;  
I knew its source of woe ,  
And then the blood, my system through,  
Came pressing on my brow—  
I thought I loved her years ago—  
I *know* I love her now.

Thus watched that tired and patient one,  
By night as well as day,  
In sadness and almost alone,  
Till weeks had passed away ;

Bereft of sleep—deprived of rest—  
 Oppressed—borne down with care,  
 Till, oh! her labours have been blessed,  
 For God has heard her prayer.  
 Her cheek resumes its wonted glow,  
 And placid is her brow—  
 I thought I loved her years ago—  
 I *know* I love her now.



## A TRUE WIFE.

**SHE** is no true wife who sustains not her husband in the day of calamity; who is not, when the world's great frown makes the heart chill with anguish, his guardian angel, growing brighter and more beautiful as misfortunes crowd around his path. Then is the time for a trial of her gentleness—then is the time for testing whether the sweetness of her temper beams only with a transient light, or, like the steady glory of the morning star, shines as brightly under the clouds. Has she smiles just as charming? Does she say, "Affliction cannot touch our purity, and should not quench our love?" Does she try, by happy little inventions, to lift from his sensitive spirit the burden of thought?

There are wives—no, there are beings who, when dark hours come, fall to repining and upbraiding—thus adding to outside anxiety harrowing scenes of domestic strife—as if all the blame in the world would make one hair white or black, or change the decree gone forth. Such know not that our darkness is Heaven's light—our

trials are but steps in a golden ladder, by which, if we rightly ascend, we may at last gain that eternal light, and bathe for ever in its fullness and beauty.

“*Is that all?*” and the gentle face of the wife beamed with joy. Her husband had been on the verge of distraction—all his earthly possessions were gone, and he feared the result of her knowledge, she had been so tenderly cared for all her life! But, says Irving’s beautiful story, “a friend advised him to give not sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eyelids, until he had unfolded to her his hapless case.”

And that was her answer, with the smile of an angel—“*Is that all?* I feared by your sadness it was worse. Let these things be taken—all this splendour, let it go! I care not for it—I only care for my husband’s love and confidence. You shall forget in my affection that you ever were in prosperity—only still love me, and I will aid you to bear these little reverses with cheerfulness.”

Still love her! a man must reverence, ay, and liken her to the very angels, for such a woman is a living revelation of Heaven.



## THE DYING CHILD.

WE take from “Household Words” the touching conclusion of a story entitled “The Three Sisters.” The youngest sister, Gabrielle, has been cast off by her two elder sisters, Joanna and Bertha, hard, stern women, because she clung to her mother, who had disgraced



them. Years go by, and one of the sisters is removed to another world. The story proceeds:—

It was a burial in a village churchyard, and standing by an open grave there was one mourner only, a woman—Bertha Vaux. Alone, in sadness and silence, with few tears—for she was little used to weep—she stood and looked upon her sister's funeral; stood and saw the coffin lowered, and heard the first handful of earth fall rattling on the coffin lid; then turned away, slowly, to seek her solitary house. The few spectators thought her cold and heartless; perhaps, if they could have raised that black veil, they would have seen such sorrow in her face as might have moved the hearts of most of them.

The sun shone warmly over hill and vale that summer's day, but Bertha Vaux shivered as she stepped within the shadow of her lonely house. It was so cold there; so cold and damp and dark, as if the shadow of that death that had entered it was still lingering around. The stunted evergreens, on which, since they first grew, no sunlight had ever fallen, no single ray of golden light to brighten their dark, sad leaves for years, looked gloomier, darker, sadder, than they had ever looked before; the very house, with its closed shutters—all closed, except one in the room where the dead had lain—seemed mourning for the stern mistress it had lost. A lonely woman now, lonely and sad, was Bertha Vaux.

She sat in the summer evening in her silent, cheerless room. It was so very still, not even a breath of wind to stir the trees; no voice of living thing to break upon her solitude; no sound even of a single footstep on the

dusty road; but in the solitude that was around her, countless thoughts seemed springing into life; things long forgotten; feelings long smothered, hopes once bright—bright as the opening of her life had been, that had faded and been buried long ago.

She thought of the time when she and her sister, fifteen years ago, had first come to the lonely house where now she was; of a few years later—two or three—when another younger sister had joined them there; and it seemed to Bertha, looking back, as if the house had sometimes then been filled with sunlight. The dark room in which she sat had once been lighted up—was it with the light from Gabrielle's bright eyes? In these long sad fifteen years, that little time stood out so clearly, so hopefully; it brought the tears to Bertha's eyes, thinking of it in her solitude. And how had it ended? For ten years nearly, now—for ten long years—the name of Gabrielle had never been spoken in that house. The light was gone—extinguished in a moment, suddenly; a darkness deeper than before had ever since fallen on the lonely house.

The thought of the years that had passed since then—of their eventlessness and weary sorrow; and then the thought of the last scene of all—that scene which still was like a living presence to her—her sister's death.

Joanna Vaux had been cold, stern, and unforgiving to the last; meeting death unmoved; repenting of no hard thing that she had done throughout her sad, stern life; entering the valley of the shadow of death fearlessly. But that cold death-bed struck upon the heart of the solitary woman who watched beside it, and

wakened thoughts and doubts there, which would not rest. She wept now as she thought of it, sadly and quietly, and some murmured words burst from her lips, which sounded like a prayer—not for herself only.

Then, from her sister's death-bed, she went far, far back—to her own childhood—and a scene rose up before her; one that she had closed her eyes on many a time before, thinking vainly that so she could crush it from her heart; but now she did not try to force it back. The dark room where she sat, the gloomy, sunless house, seemed fading from her sight; the long, long years, with their weary train of shame and suffering—all were forgotten. She was in her old lost home again—the home where she was born; she saw a sunny lawn, embowered with trees, each tree familiar to her and remembered well, and she herself, a happy child, was standing there; and by her side—with soft arms twining round her, with tender voice, and gentle, loving eyes, and bright hair glittering in the sunlight—there was one!

Oh, Bertha! hide thy face and weep. She was so lovely and so loving, so good and true, so patient and so tender, then. Oh! how couldst thou forget it all, and steel thy heart against her, and vow the cruel vow never to forgive her sin? Thy mother—thy own mother, Bertha, think of it.

A shadow fell across the window beside which she sat, and through her blinding tears Bertha looked up, and saw a woman standing there, holding by the hand a little child. Her face was very pale and worn, with sunken eyes and cheeks; her dress was mean and poor. She looked haggard and weary, and weak and ill; but

Bertha knew that it was Gabrielle come back. She could not speak, for such a sudden rush of joy came to her softened heart that all words seemed swallowed up in it; such deep thankfulness for the forgiveness that seemed given her, that her first thought was not a welcome, but a prayer.

Gabrielle stood without, looking at her with her sad eyes.

“We are all alone,” said she, “and very poor; will you take us in?”

Sobbing with pity and with joy, Bertha rose from her seat and hurried to the door. Trembling, she drew the wanderers in; then falling on her sister’s neck, her whole heart melted, and she cried, with gushing tears,

“Gabrielle, dear sister Gabrielle, I, too, am all alone!”

The tale that Gabrielle had to tell was full enough of sadness. They had lived together, she and her mother, for about a year, very peacefully, almost happily; and then the mother died, and Gabrielle soon after married one who had little to give her but his love. And after that the years passed on with many cares and griefs—for they were very poor, and he not strong—but with a great love ever between them, which softened the pain of all they had to bear. At last, after being long ill, he died, and poor Gabrielle and her child were left to struggle on alone.

“I think I should have died,” she said, as, weeping, she told her story to her sister, “if it had not been for my boy; and I could so well have borne to die; but, Bertha, I could not leave him to starve! It pierced my

heart with a pang so bitter that I cannot speak of it, to see his little face grow daily paler ; his little feeble form become daily feebler and thinner ; to watch the sad, unchildlike look fixing itself hourly deeper in his sweet eyes—so mournful, so uncomplaining, so full of misery. The sight killed me day by day ; and then at last, in my despair, I said to myself that I would come again to you. I thought, sister—I hoped—that you would take my darling home, and then I could have gone away and died. But God bless you !—God bless you for the greater thing that you have done, my kind sister Bertha ! Ycs—kiss me, sister dear ; it is so sweet. I never thought to feel a sister’s kiss again.”

Then kneeling down by Gabrielle’s side, with a low voice Bertha said,

“I have thought of many things, to-day. Before you came, Gabrielle, my heart was very full ; for in the still evening, as I sat alone, the memories of many years came back to me as they have not done for very long. I thought of my two sisters ; how the one had ever been to good and loving and true-hearted ; the other—though she was just, or believed herself to be so—so hard, and stern, and harsh—as, God forgive me, Gabrielle, I, too, have been. I thought of this, and understood it clearly, as I had never done before ; and then my thoughts went back, and rested on my mother—on our old home—on all the things that I had loved so well, long ago, and that for years had been crushed down in my heart and smothered there. Oh, Gabrielle, such things rushed back upon me ; such thoughts of her whom we have scorned so many years ; such dreams of happy by gone

days ; such passionate regrets ; such hope, awakening from its long, long sleep—no, sister, let me weep—do not wipe the tears away ; let me tell you of my penitence and grief—it does me good ; my heart is so full—so full that I *must* speak now, or it would burst !”

“Then you shall speak to me, and tell me all, dear sister. Ah ! we have both suffered—we will weep together. Lie down beside me ; see, there is room here for both. Yes ; lay your head upon me ; rest it upon my shoulder. Give me your hand now—ah ! how thin it is—almost as thin as mine. Poor sister Bertha ! poor, kind sister !”

So gently Gabrielle soothed her, forgetting her own grief and weariness in Bertha’s more bitter suffering and remorse. It was very beautiful to see how tenderly and patiently she did it, and how her gentle words calmed down the other’s passionate sorrow. So different from one another their grief was. Gabrielle’s was a slow, weary pain, which, day by day, had gradually withered her, eating its way into her heart ; then resting there, fixing itself there for ever. Bertha’s was like the quick, sudden piercing of a knife—a violent sorrow, that did its work in hours instead of years, convulsing body and soul for a little while, purifying them as with a sharp fire, then passing away and leaving no aching pain behind, but a new cleansed spirit.

In the long summer twilight—the beautiful summer twilight that never sinks into perfect night—these two women lay side by side together ; she that was oldest in suffering still comforting the other, until Bertha’s tears were dried, and, exhausted with the grief that was so



new to her, she lay silent in Gabrielle's arms—both silent, looking into the summer night, and thinking of the days that were for ever past. And sleeping at their feet lay Gabrielle's child, not forgotten by her watchful love, though the night had deepened so that she could not see him where he lay.

"We will not stay here, sister," Bertha had said. "This gloomy house will always make us sad. It is so dark and cold here, and Willie, more than any of us, needs the sunlight to strengthen and cheer him, poor boy."

"And I, too, shall be glad to leave it," Gabrielle answered.

So they went. They did not leave the village; it was a pretty, quiet place, and was full of old recollections to them—more bitter than sweet, perhaps, most of them—but still such as it would have been pain to separate themselves from entirely, as, indeed, it is always sad to part from things and places which years, either of joy or sorrow, have made us used to. So they did not leave it, but chose a little cottage, a mile or so from their former house—a pleasant little cottage in a dell, looking to the south, with honeysuckle and ivy twining together over it, up to the thatched roof. A cheerful little nook it was, not over bright or gay, but shaded with large trees all round it, through whose green branches the sunlight came, softened and mellowed, into the quiet rooms. An old garden, too, there was, closed in all round with elm-trees—a peaceful, quiet place, where one would love to wander, or to lie for hours upon the grass, looking through the green leaves upwards to the calm blue sky.



To Gabrielle, wearied with her sorrow, this place was like an oasis in the desert. It was so new a thing to her to find rest anywhere; to find one little spot where she could lay her down, feeling no care for the morrow. Like one exhausted with long watching, she seemed now for a time to fall asleep.

The summer faded into autumn; the autumn into winter. A long, cold winter it was, the snow lying for weeks together on the frozen ground; the bitter, withering east wind moaning day and night, through the great branches of the bare old elms, swaying them to and fro, and strewing the snowy earth with broken boughs; a cold and bitter winter, withering not only trees and shrubs, but sapping out the life from human hearts.

He was a little delicate boy, that child of Gabrielle's. To look at him, it seemed a wonder how he ever could have lived through all their poverty and daily struggles to get bread; how that little, feeble body had not sunk into its grave long ago. In the bright summer's days a ray of sunlight had seemed to pierce to the little frozen heart, and, warming the chilled blood once more, had sent it flowing through his veins, tinging the pale cheek with rose; but the rose faded as the summer passed away, and the little marble face was pale as ever when the winter snow began to fall; the large dark eyes, which had reflected the sunbeams for a few short months, were heavy and dim again. And then presently there came another change. A spot of crimson—a deep red rose—not pale and delicate like the last, glowed often on each hollow cheek; a brilliant light

burned in the feverish, restless eye; a hollow, painful cough shook the little emaciated frame. So thin he was, so feeble, so soon wearied. Day by day the small, thin hand grew thinner and more transparent; the gentle voice and childish laugh lower and feebler; the sweet smile sweeter, and fainter, and sadder.

And Gabrielle saw it all, and, bowing to the earth in bitter mourning, prepared herself for this last great sorrow.

The spring came slowly on—slowly, very slowly. The green leaves opened themselves, struggling in their birth with the cold wind. It was very clear and bright; the sun shone all day long; but for many weeks there had been no rain, and the ground was quite parched up.

“No, Willie, dear,” Gabrielle said, “you mustn’t go out to-day. It is too cold for you yet, dear boy.”

“But, indeed, it isn’t cold, mother. Feel here, where the sun is falling, how warm it is; put your hand upon it. Oh, mother, let me go out!” poor Willie said, imploringly. “I am so weary of the hours. I won’t try to run about, only let me go and lie in the sunlight!”

“Not to-day, my darling, wait another day; perhaps the warm winds will come. Willie, dear child, it would make you ill, you must not go.”

“You say so every day, mother,” Willie said, sadly, “and my head is aching so with staying in the house.”

And at last, he praying so much for it, one day they took him out. It was a very sunny day, with scarcely a cloud in the bright, blue sky; and Bertha and Gabrielle made a couch for him in a warm, sheltered corner, and laid him on it. Poor child, he was so glad to feel

himself in the open air again. It made him so happy, that he laughed and talked as he had not done for months before; lying with his mother's hand in his, supported in her arms, she kneeling so lovingly beside him, listening with a strange, passionate mingling of joy and misery to the feeble but merry little voice that, scarcely ever ceasing, talked to her.

Poor Gabrielle, it seemed to her such a fearful mockery of the happiness that she knew could never be hers any more for ever; but, forcing back her grief upon her own sad heart, she laughed and talked gayly with him, showing by no sign how sorrowful she was.

"Mother, mother!" he cried, suddenly clapping his little, wasted hands, "I see a violet—a pure white violet, in the dark leaves there. Oh, fetch it to me! It's the first spring flower. The very first violet of all! Oh, mother, dear, I love them—the little, sweet-smelling flowers!"

"Your eyes are quicker than mine, Willie; I shouldn't have seen it, it is such a little thing. There it is, dear boy. I wish there were more for you."

"Ah, they will soon come, now! I am so glad I have seen the first. Mother, do you remember how I used to gather them at home, and bring them to papa when he was ill? He liked them, too—just as I do now."

"I remember it well, dear," Gabrielle answered, softly.

"How long ago that time seems now!" Willie said then, after a moment's pause, he asked, a little sadly "Mother, what makes me so different now from what I used to be? I was so strong and well once, and could

run about the whole day long ; mother, dear, when shall I run about again ?”

“ You are very weak, dear child, just now. We mustn't talk of running about for a little time to come.”

“ No, not for a little time : but when do you think, mother ?” The little voice trembled suddenly : “ I feel sometimes so weak—so weak, as if I never could get strong again.”

Hush, Gabrielle ! Press back that bitter sob into thy sorrowful heart, lest the dying child hear it !

“ Do not fear, my darling, do not fear. You will be quite well very soon, now.”

He looked into her tearful eye, as she tried to smile on him, with a strange, unchildlike look, as if he partly guessed the meaning in her words, but did not answer her, nor could she speak again, just then.

“ Mother, sing to me,” he said, “ sing one of the old songs I used to love. I haven't heard you sing for—oh, so long !”

Pressing her hand upon her bosom, to still her heart's unquiet beating, Gabrielle tried to sing one of the old childish songs with which, in days long past, she had been wont to nurse her child asleep. The long silent voice—silent here so many years—awoke again, ringing through the still air with all its former sweetness. Though fainter than it was of old, Bertha heard it moving through the house : and came to the open window to stand there and listen, smiling to herself to think that Gabrielle could sing again, and half weeping at some other thoughts which the long-unheard voice recalled to her.

“Oh, mother, I like that!” Willie murmured, softly, as the song died away. “It’s like long ago to hear you sing.”

They looked into one another’s eyes, both filling fast with tears; then Willie, with childish sympathy, though knowing little why she grieved, laid his arm around her neck, trying with his feeble strength to draw her towards him. She bent forward to kiss him; then hid her face upon his neck, that he might not see how bitterly she wept, and he, stroking her soft hair with his little hand, murmured the while some gentle words that only made her tears flow faster. So they lay—she growing calmer, presently—for a long while.

“Now, darling, you have stayed here long enough,” Gabrielle said, at last; “you must let me carry you into the house again.”

“Must I go so soon, mother? See how bright the sun is still.”

“But see, too, how long and deep the shadows are getting, Willie. No, my dear one, you must come in, now.”

“Mother, dear, I am so happy, to-day—so happy, and so much better than I have been for a long time, and I know it is only because you let me come out here, and lie in the sunlight. You will let me come again—every day, dear mother?”

How could she refuse the pleading voice its last request? How could she look upon the little shrunken figure, upon the little face, with its beseeching, gentle eyes, and deny him what he asked—that she might keep him to herself a few short days longer?

“ You shall come, my darling, if it makes you so happy,” she said, very softly ; then she took him in her arms, and bore him to the house, kissing him with a wild passion that she could not hide.

And so, for two or three weeks, in the bright, sunny morning, Willie was always laid on his couch, in the sheltered corner, near the elm-tree ; but though he was very happy, lying there, and would often talk gayly of the time when he should be well again, he never got strong any more.

Day by day Gabrielle watched him, knowing that the end was coming very near ; but, with her strong mother’s love, hiding her sorrow from him. She never told him that he was dying ; but sometimes they spoke together of death, and often—for he liked to hear it—she would sing sweet hymns to him, that told of the heaven he was so soon going to.

For two or three weeks it went on thus, and then the last day came. He had been suffering very much with the terrible cough, each paroxysm of which shook the wasted frame with a pain that pierced to Gabrielle’s heart : and all day he had had no rest. It was a day in May—a soft, warm day. But the couch beneath the trees was empty. He was too weak even to be carried there, but lay restlessly turning on his little bed, through the long hours, showing, by his burning cheek, and bright but heavy eye, how ill and full of pain he was. And by his side, as ever, Gabrielle knelt, soothing him with tender words ; bathing the little hands, and moistening the lips ; bending over him, and gazing on him with all her passionate love beaming in her tearful eye. But she



was wonderfully calm—watching, like a gentle angel, over him.

Through the long day, and far into the night, and still no rest or ease. Gabrielle never moved from beside him; she could feel no fatigue; her sorrow seemed to bear her up with a strange strength. At last, he was so weak that he could not raise his head from the pillow.

He lay very still, with his mother's hand in his; the flush gradually passing away from his cheek, until it became quite pale, like marble; the weary eye half closed.

“You are not suffering much, my child?”

“Oh, no, mother, not now! I am so much better.”

So much better! How deep the words went down into her heart!

“I am so sleepy,” said the little, plaintive voice, again. “If I go to sleep, wouldn't you sleep, too? You must be so tired, mother!”

“See, my darling, I will lie down here by you; let me raise your head a moment—there—lay it upon me. Can you sleep so?”

“Ah, yes, mother; that is very good.”

He was closing his eyes, when a strong impulse that Gabrielle could not resist, made her arouse him for a moment, for she knew that he was dying.

“Willie, before you sleep, have you strength to say your evening prayer?”

“Yes, mother.”

Meekly folding the little, thin, white hands, he offered up his simple thanksgiving; then said “Our Father.” The little voice, towards the end, was very faint and

weak; and as he finished, his head, which he had feebly tried to bend forward, fell back more heavily on Gabrielle's bosom."

"Good-night, mother, dear. Go to sleep."

"Good-night, my darling. God bless you, Willie, my child!"

And then they never spoke to one another any more. One sweet look upwards, to his mother's face, and the gentle eyes closed for ever.

As he fell asleep, through the parted curtains the morning light stole faintly in. Another day was breaking; but before the sun arose Gabrielle's child was dead. Softly in his sleep the spirit had passed away. When Bertha came in, after a few hours' rest that she had snatched, she found the chamber all quiet, and Gabrielle still holding, folded in her arms, the lifeless form that had been so very dear to her.

There was no violent grief in her. His death had been so peaceful and so holy that at first she did not even shed tears. Quite calmly she knelt down by his side, when they had laid him in his white dress on the bed, and kissed his pate brow and lips, looking almost reproachfully on Bertha, as, standing by her side, she sobbed aloud; quite calmly, too, she let them lead her from the room; and, as they bade her, she lay down upon her bed, and closed her eyes, as if to sleep. And then in her solitude, in the darkened room, she wept quite silently, stretching out her arms, and crying for her child.

For many years two gentle, quiet women lived alone, in the little cottage in the dell; moving amongst the

dwellers in that country village like two ministering angels; nursing the sick, comforting the sorrowful, helping the needy, soothing many a death-bed with their gentle, holy words, spreading peace around them where-soever their footsteps went. And often, in the summer evening, one of them, the youngest and most beautiful, would wend her quiet way to the old churchyard; and there, in a green, sunny spot, would calmly sit and work for hours, while the lime-trees waved their leaves above her, and the sunlight shining through them, danced and sparkled on a little grave.

\*\*\*











THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

University of California  
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY  
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388  
Return this material to the library  
from which it was borrowed.

AUG 10 1999

▶ Q1 JAN 23 1995

JAN 16 1996

NOV 15 1999

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 001 347 628 8

PS  
645  
A76o

Un